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THE NEW YORK LEDGER

DEVOTED TO CHOICE LITERATURE, ROMANCE, THE NEWS AND COMMERCE

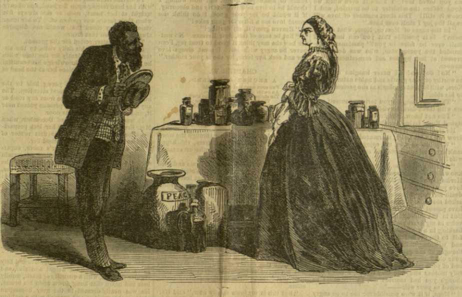
VOL. XIX. ROBERT BONNER, PUBLISHER, 40 PARK ROW. NEW YORK, MARCH 28, 1863 TERMS, $2 PER ANNUM, IN ADVANCE. NO. 4.

TO A LOST ONE.

BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

My dear, lost Spirit, it is midnight now,
And a pale cloud, like that whose shadow fell
Upon our hearts on that remembered eve,
Is passing o'er the moon, but now the shade
Falls on one heart alone. I am alone,
My dear and long-lost friend. O, whereso'er
In the vast universe of God thou art,
I pray thee stoop at this mysterious hour
To the dark earth from thy all-radiant home,
And hold communion with thy weeping friend
As in the hours departed.
Ah, I feel,
Sweet Spirit, thou hast heard and blest my prayer;
I hear the moving of thy angel-plumes
Above me and around—the very air
Is glowing with a thousand seraph-thoughts,
Bright as the sparkles of a shooting-star—
A hand from which the electric fire of heaven
Seems flashing through my frame is clasped in mine—
Thy blessed voice, with its remembered tones
Softened to more than mortal melody,
Is thrilling through my heart, as 'twere the voice
Of the lost Pleiad calling from its place
In the eternal void—and our two souls
Blend once again as erst they used to blend—
The heavenly with the earthly.
Fare thee well!
Sweet Spirit, fare thee well! The blessed words
That thou, this night, hast whispered to me here,
Above the mound that hides thy mortal form,
Will purify my soul, and strengthen me
To bear the ills and agonies of life,
And point me to an immortality
With thee in God's own holy Paradise.

[ENTERED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS, IN THE YEAR 1863, BY ROBERT BONNER, IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK.]



THE "PROFESSOR" DISCHARGES A PAINFUL DUTY.

SELF-MADE;

OR,

"OUT OF THE DEPTHS."

BY MRS. E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "THE HIDDEN HAND," "THE LOST HEIRESS," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FATAL DEED.

I am undone; there is no living, none,
If Bertram be away. It were all one,
That I should love a bright particular star,
And think to wed it, he is so above me.
The hind that would be mated by the lion,
Must die for love. 'Twas pretty though a plague
To see him every hour; to sit and draw
His arched brows, his hawking eyes, [illegible] curls
In our heart's table; heart too capable
Of every line and trick of his sweet favor.
SHAKESPEARE.

Hannah Worth walked home, laden like a beast of burden, with an enormous bag of hanked yarn on her back. She entered her hut, dropped the burden on the floor, and stopped to take breath.

"I think they might have sent a negro man to bring that for you, Hannah," said Nora, pausing in her spinning.

"As if they would do that!" panted Hannah.

Not a word was said upon the subject of Herman Brudenell's morning visit. Hannah forbore to allude to it from pity; Nora from modesty.

Hannah sat down to rest, and Nora got up to prepare their simple afternoon meal. For these sisters, like many poor women, took but two meals a day.

The evening passed much as usual; but the next morning, as the sisters were at work, Hannah putting the warp for Mrs. Brudenell's new webb of cloth in the loom, and Nora spinning, the elder noticed that the younger often paused in her work and glanced uneasily from the window. Ah, too well, Hannah understood the meaning of those involuntary glances. Nora was "watching for the steps that came not back again!"

Hannah felt sorry for her sister; but she said to herself:

"Never mind, she will be all right in a few days. She will forget him."

This did not happen so, however. As day followed day, and Herman Brudenell failed to appear, Nora Worth grew more uneasy, expectant and anxious. Ah! who can estimate the real heart-sickness of "hope deferred!" Every morning she said to herself: "He will surely come to-day!" Every day each sense of hearing and of seeing was on the *qui vive* to catch the first sound or the first sight of his approach. Every night she went to bed to weep in silent sorrow.

All other sorrows may be shared and lightened by sympathy, except that of a young girl's disappointment in love. With that no one intermeddles with impunity. To notice it is to distress her; to speak of it is to insult her; even her sister must in silence respect it; as the expiring dove folds her wing over her mortal wound, so does the maiden jealously conceal her grief and die. Days grew into weeks and Herman did not come. And still Nora watched and listened as she spun—every nerve strained to its utmost tension in vigilance and expectancy. Human nature—especially a girl's nature—can not bear such a trial for any long time together. Nora's health began to fail; first she lost her spirits, and then her appetite, and finally her sleep. She grew pale, thin and nervous.

Hannah's heart ached for her sister.

"This will never do," she said; "suspense is killing her. I must end it."

So one morning while they were at work as usual, and Nora's hand was pausing on her spindle, and her eyes were fixed upon the narrow path leading through the Forest Valley, Hannah spoke:

"It will not do, dear; he is not coming! he will never come again; and since he can not be any thing to you *he ought not to come!*"

"Oh, Hannah, I know it; but it is killing me!"

These words were surprised from the poor girl; for the very next instant her waxen cheeks, brow, neck, and very ears kindled up into fiery blushes, and hiding her face in her hands, she sank down in her chair overwhelmed.

Hannah watched and then went to her, and began to caress her, saying:

"Nora, Nora, dear; Nora, love; Nora, my own darling, look up!"

"Don't speak to me; I am glad he does not come; never mention his name to me again, Hannah!" said the stricken girl in a low, peremptory whisper.

Hannah felt that this order must be obeyed, and so she went back to her loom and worked in [illegible]

After a few minutes Nora arose and resumed her spinning, and for some time the wheel whirled briskly and merrily around. But towards the middle of the day it began to turn slowly and still more slowly.

At length it stopped entirely, and the spinner said:

"Hannah, I feel very tired; would you mind if I should lay down a little while?"

"No, certainly not, my darling. Are you poorly, Nora?"

"No, I am quite well, only tired," replied the girl, as she threw herself upon the bed.

Perhaps Hannah had made a fatal mistake in saying to her sister "He will never come again," and so depriving her of the last frail plank of hope, and letting her sink in the waves of despair. Perhaps, after all, suspense is not the worst of all things to bear; for in suspense there is hope, and in hope, life! Certain it is that a prop seemed withdrawn from Nora, and from this day she rapidly sunk. She would not take to her bed. Every morning she would insist upon rising and dressing, though daily the effort was more difficult. Every day she would go to her wheel and spin slowly and feebly, until by fatigue she was obliged to stop and throw herself upon the bed. To all Hannah's anxious questions she answered:

"I am very well! indeed there is nothing ails me; only I am so tired!"

One day about this time Reuben Gray called in to see Hannah. Reuben was one of the most discreet of lovers, never venturing to visit his beloved more than once in each month.

"Look at Nora!" said Hannah in a heart-broken tone, as she pointed to her sister, who was sitting at her wheel, not spinning, but gazing from the window down the narrow foot-path, and apparently lost in mournful reverie.

"I'll go and fetch a medical man," said Reuben, and he left the hut for that purpose.

But distances from house to house in that sparsely settled neighborhood were great, and doctors were few and could not be had the moment they were called for. So it was not until the next day that Doctor Potts, the round bodied little medical attendant of the neighborhood, made his appearance at the hut.

He was welcomed by Hannah, who introduced him to her sister.

Nora received his visit with a great deal of nervous irritability, declaring that nothing at all ailed her, only that she was tired.

"Tired," repeated the doctor, as he felt her pulse and watched her countenance. "Yes, tired of living! a serious fatigue this, Hannah! Her malady is more on the mind than the body! You must try to rouse her, take her into company, keep her amused. If you were able to travel, I should recommend change of scene; but, of course, that is out of the question, my poor girl. However, give her this according to the directions. I will call in again to see her in a few days." And so saying the doctor left a bottle of medicine and took his departure.

That day the doctor had to make a professional visit of inspection to the negro quarters at Brudenell Hall; so he mounted his fat little white cob and trotted down the hill in the direction of the valley.

When he arrived at Brudenell Hall he was met by Mrs. Brudenell, who said to him:

"Dr. Potts, I wish before you leave you would see my son. I am seriously anxious about his health. He objected to my sending for you; but now that you are here on a visit to the quarters, perhaps his objections may give way."

"Very well, madam; but since he does not wish to be attended, perhaps he had better not know that my visit is to him; I will just make you a call as usual."

"Join us at lunch, doctor, and you can observe him at your leisure."

"Thank you, madam. What seems the matter with Mr. Brudenell?"

"A general failu [illegible] any particular disease. [illegible] now better, I [illegible] mind."

"Humph! a second case of that kind to-day! Well, madam, I will join you at two o'clock," said the doctor, as he trotted off towards the negro quarters.

Punctually at the hour the doctor presented himself at the luncheon table of Mrs. Brudenell. There were present Mrs. Brudenell, her two daughters, her son, and a tall, dark, distinguished looking man, whom the lady named as Colonel Mervin.

The conversation, enlivened by a bottle of fine champagne, flowed briskly and cheerfully around the table. But through all the doctor watched Herman Brudenell. He was indeed changed. He looked ill, yet he ate, drank, laughed and talked with the best there. But when his eye met that of the docter fixed upon him, it flashed with a threatening glance that seemed to repell scrutiny.

The doctor, to turn the attention of the lady from her son, said:

"I was at the hut on the hill to-day. One of those poor girls, the youngest, Nora I think they call her, is in a bad way. She seems to me to be sinking into a decline." As he said this he happened to glance at Herman Brudenell. That gentleman's eyes were fixed upon his with a gaze of wild alarm, but they sank as soon as noticed.

"Poor creatures! that class of people scarcely ever get enough to eat or drink, and thus so many of them die of decline brought on from insufficiency of nourishment. I will send a bag of flour up to the hut to-morrow," said Mrs. Brudenell, complacently.

Soon after they all arose from the table.

The little doctor offered his arm to Mrs. Brudenell, and as they walked to the drawing-room he found an opportunity of saying to her:

"It is I think as you surmised. There is something on his mind. Try to find out what it is. That is my advice. It is of no use to teaze him with medical attendance."

When they reached the drawing-room, they found the boy with the mail bag waiting for his mistress. She quickly unlocked and distributed its contents.

"Letters for everybody except myself! But here is a late copy of the 'London Times' with which I can amuse myself while you look over your epistles, ladies and gentlemen," said Mrs. Brudenell, as she settled herself to the perusal of her paper. She skipped the leader, read the court circular and was deep in the column of casualties, when she suddenly cried out:

"Good Heaven, Herman! what a catastrophe!"

"What is it, mother?"

"A collision on the London and Brighton Railway, and ever so many people killed or wounded, and—gracious goodness!"

"What, mother?"

"Among those instantly killed the Marquis and Marchioness of Brambleton and the Countess of Hurstmonceux!"

"NO!!" cried the young man, rushing across the room, snatching the paper from his mother's hand, and with starting eyes fixed upon the paragraph that she hastily pointed out, seeming to devour the words.

A few days after this Nora Worth sat propped up in an easy chair by the open window that commanded the view of the Forest Valley and of the opposite hill crowned with the splendid mansion of Brudenell Hall.

But Nora was not looking upon this view; at least except upon a very small part of it;—namely, the little narrow foot-path that led down her own hill and was lost in the shade of the valley. The doctor's prescriptions had done Nora no good; how should they? Could he, more than others, "minister to a mind diseased?" In a word, she had now grown so weak that the spinning was entirely set aside, and she passed her days, propped up in the easy chair, beside the window, through which she could watch that little path, which was now indeed so disused, so neglected and grass grown, as to be almost obliterated. [illegible] were fixed abstractedly upon this path, she uttered a great cry and started to her feet.

Hannah stopped the clatter of her shuttle to see what was the matter.

Nora was leaning from the window, gazing breathlessly down the path.

"What is it, Nora, my dear? Don't lean so far out; you will fall! What is it?"

"Oh, Hannah, he is coming! he is coming!"

"Who is coming, my darling? I see no one!" said the elder sister, straining her eyes down the path.

"But I *feel* him coming! He is coming fast! He will be in sight presently! There! what did I tell you? There he is!"

And truly at that moment Herman Brudenell advanced from the thicket and walked rapidly up the path towards the hut.

Nora sank back in her seat, overcome, almost fainting.

Another moment, and Herman Brudenell was in the room, clasping her form, and sobbing:

"Nora! Nora, my beloved! my beautiful! you have been ill and I knew it not! dying, and I knew it not! Oh! oh! oh!"

"Yes, but I am well, now that you are here!" gasped the girl, as she thrilled and trembled with returning life. But the moment this confession had been surprised from her, she blushed fiery red to the very tips of her ears, and hid her face in the pillows of her chair.

"My darling girl! My own blessed girl! do not turn your face away! look at me with your sweet eyes! See, I am here at your side, telling you how deep my own sorrow has been at the separation from you, and how much deeper at the thought that you also have suffered! Look at me! Smile on me! Speak to me, beloved! I am your own!"

These and many other wild, tender, pleading words of love he breathed in the ear of the listening, blushing, happy girl; both quite heedless of the presence of Hannah, who stood petrified with consternation.

At length, however, by the time Herman had seated himself beside Nora, Hannah recovered her presence of mind and power of motion; and she went to him and said:

"Mr. Brudenell! Is this well? Could you not leave her in peace?"

"No, I could *not* leave her! Yes, it *is* well, Hannah! The burden I spoke of is unexpectedly lifted from my life! I am a restored man. And I have come here to-day to ask Nora in your presence, and with your consent, to be my wife!"

"And with your *mother's* consent, Mr. Brudenell?"

"Hannah, that was unkind of you to throw a damper upon my joy. And look at me, I have not been in such robust health myself since you drove me away!"

As he said this, Nora's hand, which he held, closed convulsively on his, and she murmured under her breath:

"Have you been ill? You are not pale!"

"No, love, I was only sad at our long separation; now you see I am flushed with joy; for now I shall see you every day!" he replied, lifting her hand to his lips.

Hannah was dreadfully disturbed. She was delighted to see life and light and color flowing back to her sister's face; but she was dismayed at the very cause of this—the presence of Herman Brudenell. The instincts of her affections and the sense of her duties were at war in her bosom. The latter as yet was in the ascendancy. It was under its influence she spoke again:

"But, Mr. Brudenell, your mother?"

"Hannah! Hannah! don't be disagreeable! You are too young to play duenna yet!" he said, gaily.

"I do not know what you mean by duenna, Mr. Brudenell, but I know what is due to your mother," replied the elder sister, gravely.

"Mother, mother, mother, how tiresome you are, Hannah, everlastingly repeating the same word over and over and over again! You shall not make us miserable. We intend to be happy, now, Nora and myself. Do we not, dearest?" he added, changing the testy tone in which he had spoken to the elder sister, for one of the deepest tenderness as he turned and addressed the younger.

"Yes, but, your mother," murmured Nora, very softly and timidly.

"You too! Decidedly that word is infectious like yawning! Well, my dears, since you will bring it on the tapis, let us discuss and dismiss it. My mother is a very fine woman, Hannah; but she is unreasonable, Nora. She is attached to what she calls her 'order,' my dears, and never would consent to my marriage with any other than a lady of rank and wealth."

"Then you must give up Nora, Mr. Brudenell," said Hannah, gravely.

"Yes, indeed," assented poor Nora, under her breath, and turning pale.

"May the Lord give *me* up if I do!" cried the young man, impetuously.

"You will never defy your mother," said Hannah.

"Oh, no, oh, no, I should be frightened to death," gasped Nora, trembling between weakness and fear.

"No, I will never defy my mother; there are other ways of doing things; I must marry Nora, and we must keep the affair quiet for a time."

"I do not understand you," said Hannah, coldly.

"Nora does though! Do you not, my darling?" exclaimed Herman, triumphantly.

And the blushing but joyous face of Nora answered him.

"You say you will not defy your mother. Do you mean then to deceive her, Mr. Brudenell?" inquired the elder sister, severely.

"Hannah, don't be abusive! This is just the whole matter, in brief. I am twenty-one, master of myself and my estate. I could marry Nora at any time, openly, without my mother's consent. But that would give her great pain. It would not kill her, nor make her illl, but it would wound her in her tenderest point—her love of her son, and her love of rank; *it would* [illegible] She would never forgive me, nor acknowledge my wife."

"Then why do you speak at all of marrying Nora?" interrupted Hannah, angrily.

Herman turned and looked at Nora. That mute look was his only answer, and it was eloquent; it said, plainly, what his lips forbore to speak: "I have won her love, and I ought to marry her; for if I do not, she will die."

Then he continued as if Hannah had not interrupted him:

"I wish to get on as easily as I can between these conflicting difficulties. I will not wrong Nora, and I will not grieve my mother. The only way to avoid doing either will be for me to marry my darling privately, and keep the affair a secret until a fitting opportunity offers to publish it."

"A secret marriage! Mr. Brudenell! is that what you propose to my sister?"

"Why not, Hannah?"

"Secret marriages are terrible things!"

"Disappointed affections, broken hearts, early graves, are more terrible."

"Fudge!" was the word that rose to Hannah's lips, as she looked at the young man; but when she turned to her sister, she felt that his words might be true.

"Besides, Hannah," he continued, "this will not be a secret marriage. You cannot call that a secret which will be known to four persons—the parson, you, Nora and myself. I shall not even bind you or Nora to keep the secret longer than you think it her interest to declare it. She shall have the marriage certificate in her own keeping, and every legal protection and defence; so that even if I should die suddenly——"

Nora gasped for breath.

——"she would be able to claim and establish her rights and position in the world. Hannah, you must see that I mean to act honestly and honorably," said the young man, in an earnest tone.

"I see that you do; but, Mr. Brudenell, it appears to me, that the fatal weakness of which you have already spoken to me—the 'propensity to please' is again leading you into error. You wish to save Nora; and you wish to spare your mother; and to do both these things, you are sacrificing——"

"What, Hannah?"

"Well—fair, plain, open, straight-forward, upright dealing, such as should always exist beween man and woman."

"Hannah, you are unjust to me! Am I *not* fair, plain, open, straight-forward, upright, and all the rest of it in my dealing with you?"

"With us, yes; but——"

"With my mother it is necessary to be cautious. It is true that she has no right to oppose my marriage with Nora; but yet she *would* oppose it, even to death! Therefore, to save trouble and secure peace, I would marry my dear Nora quietly. Mystery, Hannah, is not necessarily guilt; it is often wisdom and mercy. Do not object to a little harmless mystery that is besides to secure peace! Come, Hannah, what say you?"

"How long must this marriage, should it take place, be kept a secret?" inquired Hannah, uneasily.

"Not one hour longer than you and Nora think it necessary that it should be declared! Still, I should beg your forbearance as long as possible. Come, Hannah, your answer!"

"I must have time to reflect. I fear I should be doing very wrong to consent to this marriage, and yet—and yet—— But I must take a night to think of it! To-morrow, Mr. Brudenell, I will give you an answer!"

With this reply the young man was obliged to be contented. Soon after he arose and took his leave.

When he was quite out of hearing, Nora arose and threw herself into her sister's arms, crying:

"Oh, Hannah, consent! consent! I cannot live without him!"

The elder sister caressed the younger tenderly; told her of all the dangers of a secret marriage; of all the miseries of an ill-sorted one; and implored her to dismiss her wealthy lover, and struggle with her misplaced love.

Nora replied only with tears and sobs, and vain repetitions of the words:

"I cannot live without him, Hannah! I can not live without him!"

Alas, for weakness, wilfulness and passion! They, and not wise counsels gained the day. Nora would not give up her lover; would not struggle with her love; but would have her own way.

At length, in yielding a reluctant acquiescence, Hannah said:

"I would never countenance this—never, Nora! but for one reason; it is that I know, whether I consent or not, you two, weak and wilful and passionate as you are, will rush into this imprudent marriage all the same! And I think for your sake, it had better take place with my sanction, and in my presence, than otherwise."

Nora clasped her sister's neck, and covered her face with kisses.

"He means well by us, dear Hannah—indeed he does, bless him! So do not look so grave because we are going to be happy."

Had Herman felt sure of his answer the next day? It really seemed so; for when he made his appearance at the cottage in the morning, he brought the marriage license in his pocket, and a peripatetic minister in his company.

And before the astonished sisters had time to recover their self-possession, Herman Brudenell's will had carried his purpose, and the marriage ceremony was performed. The minister then wrote out the certificate, which was signed by himself, and witnessed by Hannah, and handed it to the bride.

"Now, dearest Nora," whispered the triumphant bridegroom, "I am happy, and you are safe!"

But—were either of them really safe or happy?

CHAPTER V.

LOVE AND FATE.

Amid the sylvan solitude
Of unshorn grass and waving wood
And waters glancing bright and fast,
A softened voice was in her ear,
Sweet as those lulling sounds and fine
The hunter lifts his head to hear,
Now far and faint, now full and near—
The murmur of the wood swept pine.
A manly form was ever nigh,
A bold, free hunter, with an eye
Whose dark, keen glance had power to wake
Both fear and love—to awe and charm.
Faded the world that they had known,
A poor vain shadow, cold and waste,
In the warm present bliss alone
Seemed they of actual life to taste.
WHITTIER.

It was in the beautiful month of June they were married; when the sun shone with his brightest splendor; when the sky was of the clearest blue; when the grass was of the freshest green, the woods in their fullest foliage, the flowers in their richest bloom, and all nature in her most luxuriant life! Yes, June was their honeymoon; the forest shades, their bridal halls, and birds and flowers and leaves and rills their train of attendants. For weeks they lived a kind of fairy life, wandering together through the depths of the valley forest, discovering through the illumination of their love new beauties and glories in the earth and sky; new sympathies with every form of life. Were ever suns so bright, skies so clear, and woods so green as theirs, in this [illegible] and joy?

"It seems to me that I must have been deaf and blind and stupid in the days before I knew you, Herman! for *then* the sun seemed only to shine, and *now* I feel that he smiles as well as shines; *then* the trees only seemed to bend under a passing breeze, *now* I know they stoop to caress us; *then* the flowers seemed only to be crowded, *now* I know they draw together to kiss; *then* indeed I loved nature, but *now* I know that she also is alive and loves me!" said Nora, one day, as they sat upon a bank of wild thyme, under the spreading branches of an old oak tree, that stood alone in a little opening of the forest.

"You darling of nature! you might have known that all along!" exclaimed Herman, enthusiastically pressing her to his heart.

"Oh, how good you are to love me so much! you—so high, so learned, so wealthy; you who have seen so many fine ladies—to come down to *me*, a poor, ignorant, weaver-girl!" said Nora, humbly—for true love in many a woman is ever most humble and most idolatrous, abasing itself and idolizing its object.

"Come down to *you*, my angel and my queen! to *you*, whose beauty is so heavenly and so royal that it seems to me every one should worship and adore you! how could I come down to *you!* Ah, Nora, it seems to me that it is *you* who have stooped to me! There are kings on this earth, my beloved, who might be proud to place such regal beauty on their thrones beside them! For, oh! you are as beautiful, my Nora, as any woman of old, for whom heroes lost worlds!"

"Do you think so? do you really think so? I am so glad for your sake! I wish I were ten times as beautiful! and high-born, and learned, and accomplished, and wealthy, and everything else that is good, for your sake! Herman, I would be willing to pass through a fiery furnace if by doing so, I could come out like refined gold for your sake!"

"Hush, hush, sweet love! that fiery furnace of which you speak, is the scriptural symbol for fearful trial and intense suffering! far be it from you! for I would rather my whole body were consumed to ashes than one shining tress of your raven hair should be singed!"

"But, Herman! one of the books you read to me said: 'All that is good must be toiled for; all that is best must be suffered for;' and I am willing to do or bear anything in the world that would make me more worthy of you!"

"My darling, you are worthy of a monarch, and much too good for me!"

"How kind you are to say so! but for all that I know I am only a poor, humble, ignorant girl, quite unfit to be your wife! And, oh! sometimes it makes me very sad to think so!" said Nora, with a deep sigh.

"Then do not think so, my own! why should you? You are beautiful; you are good; you are lovely and beloved, and you ought to be happy!" exclaimed Herman.

"Oh, I am happy! very happy *now!* For whatever I do or say, right or wrong, is good in your eyes, and pleases you because you love me so much. God bless you! God love you! God save you, whatever becomes of your poor Nora!" she said, with a still heavier sigh.

At this moment a soft summer cloud floated between them and the blazing meridian sun, veiling its glory.

"Why, what is the matter, love? What has come over you?" inquired Herman, gently caressing her.

"I do not know; nothing more than that perhaps," answered Nora, pointing to the cloud that was now passing over the sun.

"'Nothing more than that.' Well, that has now passed, so smile forth again, my sun!" said Herman, gaily.

"Ah, dear Herman, if this happy life could only last! this life in which we wander or repose in these beautiful summer woods, among rills and flowers and birds! Oh, it is like the Arcadia of which you read to me in your books, Herman! Ah, if it would only last!"

"Why should it not, love?"

"Because it cannot. Winter will come with its wind and snow and ice. The woods will be bare, the grass dry, the flowers all withered, the streams frozen and the birds gone away, and we——" Here her voice sank into silence, but Herman took up the word:

"Well, and we, beloved! we shall pass to something much better! We are not partridges or squirrels to live in the woods and fields all winter! We shall go to our own luxurious home! You will be my loved and honored and happy wife; the mistress of an elegant house, a fine estate and many negroes. You will have superb furniture, beautiful dresses, splendid jewels, servants to attend you, carriages, horses, pleasure boats, and everything else that heart could wish or money buy, or love find to make you happy! Think! oh, think of all the joys that are in store for you!"

"Not for me! Oh, not for me those splendors and luxuries and joys that you speak of! They are too good for me; I shall never possess them; I know it Herman; and I knew it even in that hour of heavenly bliss when you first told me you loved me! I knew it even when we stood before the minister to be married, and I know it still! This short summer of love will be all the joy I shall ever have."

"In the name of Heaven, Nora, what do you mean? Is it possible that you can imagine I shall ever be false to you?" passionately demanded the young man, who was deeply impressed at last by the sad earnestness of her manner.

"No! no! no! I never imagine anything unworthy of your gentle and noble nature," said Nora, with fervent emphasis as she pressed closer to his side.

"Then why, *why* do you torture yourself and me with these dark previsions?"

"I do not know. Forgive me, Herman," softly sighed Nora, laying her cheek against his own.

He stole his arm around her waist, and as he drew her to his heart, murmured:

"Why should you not enjoy all the wealth, rank and love to which you are entitled as my wife?"

"Ah! dear Herman, I cannot tell *why*. I only know that I never shall! Bear with me, dear Herman, while I say *this:* After I had learned to love you; after I had grieved myself almost to death for your absence; when you returned and asked me to be your wife, I seemed suddenly to have passed from darkness into radiant light! But in the midst of it all I seemed to hear a voice in my heart saying: 'Poor moth! you are basking in a consuming fire; you will presently fall to the ground a burnt, blackened, tortured and writhing thing.' And, Herman, when I thought of the great difference between us; of your old family, and high rank and vast wealth; and of your magnificent house, and your stately lady mother and fine lady sisters, I knew that though you had married me, I never could be owned as your wife——"

"Nora, if it were possible for me to be angry with you I should be so!" interrupted Herman, vehemently; "'you never could be owned as my wife!' I tell you that you *can* be—and that you *shall* be, and very soon! It was only to avoid a rupture with my mother that I married you privately at all. Have I not surrounded you with every legal security? Have I not armed you against myself? Do you not know that even if it were possible for me to turn rascal, and become so mean and miserable and dishonored as to desert you, you could still demand your rights as a wife, and compel me to yield them!"

"As if I would! Oh, Herman, as if I would depend upon anything but your dear love to give me all I need! Armed against you, am I? I do not choose to be so! It is enough for me to know that I am your wife. I do not care to be able to prove it; for, Herman, were it possible for you to forsake me, I should not insist upon my 'rights'—I should die. Therefore, why should I be armed with legal proofs against *you*, my Herman, my life, my soul, my self? I will not continue so!" And with a generous abandonment, she drew from her bosom the marriage certificate, tore it to pieces, and scattered it abroad, saying: "There now! I had kept it as a love token, close to my heart, little knowing it was a cold-blooded, cautious, legal proof, else it should have gone before, where it has gone now, to the winds! There now, Herman, I am your own wife, your own Nora, quite unarmed and defenceless before you; trusting only to your faith for my happiness; knowing that you will never *willingly* forsake me; but feeling that if you do, I should not pursue you, but die!"

"Dear, trusting girl! would you indeed deprive yourself of all defences thus? But, my Nora, did you suppose, when I took you to my bosom, that I had intrusted your peace and safety and honor, only to a scrap of perishable paper? No, Nora, no! Infidelity to you is forever impossible to me; but death is always possible to all persons; and so, though I could never forsake you, I might die and leave you; and to guard against the consequences of such a contingency, I surrounded you with every legal security. The minister that married us resides in this county; the witness that attended us lives with you. So that if to-morrow I should die, you could claim, as my widow, your half of my personal property, and your life interest in my estate. And if to-morrow you should become impatient of your condition as a secreted wife, and wish to enter upon all the honors of Brudenell Hall, you have the power to do so!"

"As if I would! As if it was for *that* I loved you! oh, Herman!"

"I know you would not love! And I know it was not for that you loved me! I have perfect confidence in your disinterestedness. And I hope you have as much in mine."

"I have, Herman. I have!"

"Then, to go back to the first question, why did you wound me by saying, that though I had married you, you knew you never could be owned as my wife?"

"I spoke from a deep conviction! Oh, Herman, I *know* you will never willingly forsake me; but I *feel* you will never acknowledge me!"

"Then you must think me a villain!" said Herman, bitterly.

"No, no, no; I think, if you must have my thoughts, you are the gentlest, truest and noblest among men."

"You cannot get away from the point; if you think I could desert you, you *must* think I am a villain!"

"Oh, no, no; besides I did not say you would desert me! I said you would never own me!"

"It is in effect the same thing."

"Herman, understand me: when I say from the deep conviction I feel, that you will never own me, I also say, that you will be blameless."

"Those two things are incompatible, Nora! But why do you persist in asserting that you will never be owned?"

"Ah, dear, me, because it is true!"

"But why do you think it is true?"

"Because when I try to imagine our future, I see only my own humble hut, with its spinning wheel and loom. And I feel I shall never live in Brudenell Hall!"

"Nora, hear me: this is near the first of July; in six months, that is before the first of January, whether I live or die, as my wife or as my widow, you shall rule at Brudenell Hall!"

Nora smiled, a strange, sad smile.

"Listen, dearest," he continued; "my mother leaves Brudenell in December. She thinks the two young ladies, my sisters, should have more society; so she has purchased a fine house in a fashionable quarter of Washington City. The workmen are even now busy decorating and furnishing it. She takes possession of it early in December. Then, my Nora, when my mother and sisters are clear of Brudenell Hall, and settled in their town-house, I will bring you home, and write and announce our marriage. Thus there can be no noise. People cannot quarrel very long or fiercely through the post. And finally time and reflection will reconcile my mother to the inevitable, and we shall be all once more united and happy."

"Herman dear," said Nora, softly, "indeed *my* heart is towards your mother; I could love and revere and serve her as dutifully as if I were her daughter, if she would only deign to let me. And, at any rate, whether she will or not, I cannot help loving and honoring her, because she is *your* mother and loves *you*. And, oh, Herman, if she could look into my heart, and see how truly I love *you*, her son, how gladly I would suffer to make you happy, and how willing I should be to live in utter poverty and obscurity, if it would be for your good, I do think she would love me a little for your sake!"

"Heaven grant it, my darling!"

"But be sure of this, dear Herman. No matter how she may think it good to treat me, I can never be angry with her. I must *always* love her and seek her favor, for she is your mother."

CHAPTER VI.

A SECRET REVEALED.

Full soon upon that dream of sin
An awful light came bursting in;
The shrine was cold at which she knelt;
The idol of that shrine was gone;
An humbled thing of shame and guilt;
Outcast and spurned and lone,
Wrapt in the shadows of that crime,
With withered heart and burning brain,
And tears that fell like fiery rain,
She passed a fearful time.
WHITTIER.

Thus in pleasant wandering through the wood and sweet repose beneath the trees, the happy lovers passed the blooming months of summer and the glowing months of autumn.

But when the seasons changed again and with the last days of November came the bleak northwestern winds that stripped the last leaves from the bare trees, and covered the ground with snow and bound up the streams with ice, and drove the birds to the South, the lovers withdrew within doors, and spent many hours beside the humble cottage fire-side.

Here for the first time Herman had ample opportunity of finding out how very poor the sisters really were, and how very hard *one* of them at least worked.

And from the abundance of his own resources he would have supplied their wants and relieved them from this excess of toil; but that there was a reserve of honest pride in these poor girls that forbade them to accept his pressing offers.

"But this is my own family now," said Herman. "Nora is my wife and Hannah is my sister-in-law, and it is equally my duty and pleasure to provide for them."

"No, Herman! No, dear Herman! we cannot be consid[illegible] as your family until you publicly acknowle[illegible] Dear Herman, do not [illegible] give me pain when I [illegible]cation to receive anything from you, until I do so as your acknowledged wife," said Nora.

"You give everything—you give your hand, your heart, yourself! and you will take nothing," said the young man, sadly.

"Yes, I take as much as I give! I take your hand, your heart and yourself in return for mine. That is fair; but I will take no more until as your wife I take the head of your establishment," said Nora, proudly.

"Hannah, is this right? She is my wife; she promised to obey me, and she defies me—I ask you is this right?"

"Yes, Mr. Brudenell. When she is your acknowledged wife, in your own house, then she will obey and never 'defy' you, as you call it; but now, it is quite different; she has not the shield of your name, and she must take care of her own self-respect until you relieve her of the charge," said the elder sister, gravely.

"Hannah, you are a terrible duenna! You would be an acquisition to some crabbed old Spaniard who had a beautiful young wife to look after! Now I want you to tell me how on earth my burning up that old loom and wheel and putting a little comfortable furniture in this room, and paying you sufficient to support you both, can possibly hurt her self-respect?" demanded Herman.

"It will do more than that! it will hurt her character, Mr. Brudenell; and that should be as dear to you as to herself."

"It is! it is the dearest thing in life to me! But how should what I propose to do hurt either her self-respect or her character? You have not told me that yet!"

"This way, Mr. Brudenell! If we were to accept your offers, our neighbors would talk of us."

"Neighbors! why, Hannah, what neighbors have you? In all the months that I have been coming here, I have not chanced to meet a single soul!"

"No, you have not. And if you had, once in a way, met any one here, they would have taken you to be a mere passer-by resting yourself in our hut; but if you were to make us as comfortable as you wish, why the very first chance visiter to the hut who would see that the loom and the spinning-wheel and old furniture were gone, and were replaced by the fine carpet, curtains, chairs and sofa that you wish to give us, would go away and tell the wonder. And people would say—'Where did Hannah Worth get these things?' or, 'How do they live?' or, 'Who supports those girls?' and so on. Now, Mr. Brudenell, those are questions *I will not have asked* about myself and my sister, and that you ought not to wish to have asked about your wife!"

"Hannah, you are quite right! You always are! And yet it distresses me to see you living and working as you do."

"We are enured to it, Mr. Brudenell."

"But it will not be for long, Hannah. Very soon my mother and sisters go to take possession of their new house in Washington. When they have left Brudenell, I will announce our marriage and bring you and your sister home."

"Not me, Mr. Brudenell! I have said before that in marrying Nora, you did not marry all her poor relatives. I have told you that I will not share the splendors of Nora's destiny. No one shall have reason to say of me, as they would say if I went home with you, that I had connived at the young heir's secret marriage with my sister for the sake of securing a luxurious home for myself. No, Mr. Brudenell, Nora is beautiful, and it is not unnatural that *she* should have made a high match; and the world will soon forgive her for it and forget her humble origin. But I am a plain, rude, hard-working woman; I am engaged to a man as poor, as rugged and toil-worn as myself. We would be strangely out of place in your mansion, subjected to the comments of your friends. We will never intrude there. I shall remain here at my weaving until the time comes, if it ever should come, when Reuben and myself may marry, and then, if possible, we will go to the West, to better ourselves in a better country."

"Well, Hannah, well, if such be your final determination, you will allow me at least to do something towards expediting your marriage. I can advance such a sum to Reuben Gray as will enable him to marry, and take you and all his own brothers and sisters to the rich lands of the West, where, instead of being encumbrances, they will be great helps to him; for there is to be found much work for every pair of hands, young or old, male or female," said the young man, not displeased, perhaps, to provide for his wife's poor relations at a distance from which they would not be likely ever to enter his sphere.

Hannah reflected for a moment and then said:

"I thank you very much for that offer, Mr. Brudenell. It was the wisest and kindest, both for yourself and us, that you could have made. And I think that if we could see our way through repaying the advance, we would gratefully accept it."

"Never trouble yourself about the repayment! Talk to Gray, and then, when my mother has gone, send him up to talk to me," said Herman.

To all this Nora said nothing. She sat silently, with her head resting upon her hand, and a heavy weight at her heart, such as she always felt when their future was spoken of. To her inner vision a heavy cloud that would not disperse always rested on that future.

Thus the matter rested for the present.

Herman continued his daily visits to the sisters, and longed impatiently for the time when he should feel free to acknowledge his beautiful young peasant-wife, and place her at the head of his princely establishment.

These daily visits of the young heir to the poor sisters attracted no general attention. The hut on the hill was so remote from any road or any dwelling-house that few persons passed near it, and fewer still entered its door.

It was near the middle of December, when Mrs. Brudenell was busy with her last preparations for her removal, that the first rumor of Herman's visits to the hut reached her.

She was in the housekeeper's room, superintending in person the selection of certain choice pots of domestic sweetmeats from the family stores, to be taken to the town-house, when Mrs. Spicer, who was attending her, said:

"If you please, ma'am, there's Jem Morris been waiting in the kitchen all the morning to see you."

"Ah! What does he want? A job, I suppose. Well, tell him to come in here," said the lady, carelessly, as she scrutinized the label upon a jar of red currant jelly.

The housekeeper left the room to obey, and returned ushering in an individual, who, as he performs an important part in this history, deserves some special notice.

He was a mulatto, between forty-five and fifty years of age, of medium height and size, and regular features, with a quantity of black, woolly hair and beard that hung down upon his breast. He was neatly dressed in the gray homespun cloth of the country, and entered with a smiling countenance and a respectful manner. Upon the whole, he was rather a good-looking and pleasing darkey. He was a character, too, in his way. He possessed a fair amount of intellect, and a considerable fund of general information. He had contrived, somehow or other, to read [illegible] everything he could lay his hands on, from the Bible to the almanac. He had formed his own opinions upon most of the subjects that interest society, and he expressed them freely. He kept himself well posted up in the politics of the day, and was ready to discuss them with any one who would enter into the debate.

He had a high appreciation of himself, and also a deep veneration for his superiors. And thus it happened that, when in the presence of his betters, he maintained a certain sort of droll dignity in himself while treating them with the utmost deference. He was faithful in his dealings with his numerous employers, all of whom he looked upon as so many helpless dependents under his protection, for whose well-being in certain respects he was strictly responsible. So much for his character. In circumstances he was a free man, living with his wife and children, who were also free, in a small house on Mr. Brudenell's estate, and supporting his family by such a very great variety of labor as had earned for him the title of "Professor of Odd Jobs." It was young Herman Brudenell, when a boy, who gave him this title, which, from its singular appropriateness, stuck to him; for he could, as he expressed it himself, "do anything as any other man could do." He could shoe a horse, doctor a cow, mend a fence, make a boot, set a bone, fix a lock, draw a tooth, roof a cabin, drive a carriage, put up a chimney, glaze a window, lay a hearth, play a fiddle, or preach a sermon. He could do all these things and many others besides too numerous to mention, and he *did* do them for the population of the whole neighborhood, who, having no regular mechanics, gave this "Jack of all Trades" a plenty of work. This universal usefulness won for him, as I said, the title of "Professor of Odd Jobs." This was soon abreviated to the simple "Professor," which had a singular significance also when applied to one who, in addition to all his other excellencies, believed himself to be pretty well posted up in law, physic and theology, upon either of which he would stop in his work to hold forth to any one who would listen.

Finally, there was another little peculiarity about the manner of the Professor. In his excessive agreeability he would always preface his answer to any observation whatever with some sort of assent, such as "yes, sir," or "yes, madam," right or wrong.

This morning the Professor entered the presence of Mrs. Brudenell, hat in hand, smiling and respectful.

"Well, Morris, what has brought *you* here this morning?" inquired the lady.

"Yes, madam. I been thinkin' about you, and should a-been here 'fore this to see after your affairs, o'ny I had to go over to Colonel Mervin's to give one of his horses a draught, and then to stop at the colored people's meetin' house to lead the exercises, and afterwards to call at the Miss Worthses to mend Miss Hannah's loom and put a few new spokes in Miss Nora's wheel. And so many people's been after me to do jobs that I'm fairly torn to pieces among um. And it's 'Poffessor' here, and 'Poffesser' there, and 'Poffessor' everywhere, till I think my senses will leave me, ma'am."

"Then, if you are so busy, why do you come here, Morris?" said Mrs. Brudenell, who was far too dignified to give him his title.

"*Yes*, madam. Why, you see ma'am, I came, as in duty bound, to look after your affairs and see as they were all right, which they are not, ma'am. There's the rain pipes along the roof of the house leaking so the cistern never gets full of water, and I must come and solder them right away, and the lightening rods wants fastenin' more securely, and——"

"Well, but see Grainger, my overseer, about these things; do not trouble me with them."

"*Yes*, Madam. I think overseers ought to be called overlookers, because they oversee so little and overlook so much. Now, there's the hinges nearly rusted off the big barn door, and I dessay he never saw it."

"Well, Morris, call his attention to that also; do whatever you find necessary to be done, and call upon Grainger to settle with you."

"*Yes*, Madam. It wasn't on'y the rain pipes and hinges as wanted attention that brought me here, however, ma'am."

"What was it then? Be quick if you please. I am very much occupied this morning."

"*Yes*, Madam. It was something I heard and felt it my duty to tell you; because you see, ma'am, I think it the duty of every honest——"

"Come, come, Morris, I have no time to listen to an oration from you now. In two words, what had you to tell me?" interrupted the lady, impatiently.

"*Yes*, Madam. It was about young Mr. Herman, ma'am."

"Mr. *Brudenell*, if you please, Morris. My son is the head of his family."

"*Certainly*, Madam. Mr. Brudenell."

"Well, what about Mr. Brudenell?"

"*Yes*, Madam. You know he was away from home every day last spring and summer."

"I remember; he went to fish; he is very fond of fishing."

"*Certainly*, Madam; but he was out every day this autumn."

"I am aware of that; he was shooting; he is an enthusiastic sportsman."

"*To be sure*, Madam, so he is; but he is gone every day this winter."

"Of course; hunting; there is no better huntsman in the country than Mr. Brudenell."

"That is very true, Madam; do you know what sort of game he is a hunting of?" inquired the professor, meaningly, but most deferentially.

"Foxes, I presume," said the lady, with a look of inquiry.

"*Yes*, Madam, sure enough; I suppose they *is* foxes, though in female form," said the professor, drily, but still respectfully.

"What, ever, do you mean, Morris?" demanded the lady, sternly."

"Well, Madam, if it was not from a sense of duty, I would not dare to speak to you on this subject; for I think when a man presumes to meddle with things above his speer, he——"

"I remarked to you before, Morris, that I had no time to listen to your moral disquisitions. Tell me at once, then, what you meant to insinuate by that strange speech," interrupted the lady.

"*Yes*, Madam, certainly. When you said Mr. Bredinell was a hunting of foxes, I saw at once the correctness of your suspicions, Madam; for they *is* foxes."

"*Who* are foxes?"

"Why, the Miss Worthses, Madam."

"The Miss Worths! the weavers! why, what on earth have *they* to do with what we have been speaking of?"

"*Yes*, madam; the Miss Worthses is the foxes that Mr. Bredinell is a huntin' of."

"The Miss Worths? My son hunting the Miss Worths! What do you mean, sir? Take care what you say of Mr. Brudenell, Morris."

"*Yes*, Madam, certainly; I won't speak another word on the subject; and I beg your pardon for having mentioned it at all; which I did from a sense of duty to your family, Madam, thinking you ought to know it; but I am very sorry I made such a mistake, and again I beg your pardon, Madam, and I humbly take my leave." And with a low bow the Professor turned to depart.

"Stop, fool!" said Mrs. Brudenell. And the "fool" stopped and turned, hat in hand, waiting further orders.

"Do you mean to say that Mr. Brudenell goes after those girls," asked the lady raising her voice ominously.

"Yes, Madam; leastways, after Miss Nora. You see, Madam, young gentlemen *will* be young gentlemen, for all their ma's can say or do; and when the blood is warm and the spirits is high, and the wine is in and the wit is out——"

"No preaching, I say! Pray, are you a clergyman or a barrister? Tell me at once what reason you have for saying that my son goes to Worth's cottage?"

"*Yes*, Madam; I has seen him often and often along of Miss Nora a walking in the valley forest, when I have been there myself looking for herbs and roots to make up my vegetable medicines with. And I have seen him go home with her. And at last I said, 'It is my bounden duty to go and tell the madam.'"

"You are very sure of what you say?"

"Yes, Madam, sure as I am of my life and my death."

"This is very annoying! very! I had supposed Mr. Brudenell to have had better principles. Of course, when a young gentleman of his position goes to see a girl of hers, it can be but with one object. I had thought Herman had better morals, and Hannah at least more sense! This is very annoying! very!" said the lady to herself, as her brows contracted with anger. After a few moments spent in silent thought, she said:

"It is the girl Nora, you say, he is with so much?"

"Yes, Madam."

"Then go the hut this very evening, and tell that girl she must come up here to-morrow morning to see me. I thank you for your zeal in my service, Morris, and will find a way to reward you. And now you may do my errand."

"Certainly, Madam! My duty to you, Madam," said the professor, with a low bow, as he left the room and hurried away to deliver his message to Nora Worth.

"This is very unpleasant," said the lady. "But since Hannah has no more prudence than to let a young gentleman visit her sister, I must talk to the poor, ignorant child myself, and warn her that she risks her good name, as well as her peace of mind."

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

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MADE FOR IMMORTALITY.

It cannot be that earth is man's only abiding-place. It cannot be that our life is a bubble, cast off by the ocean of eternity, to float a moment upon its waves, and then sink into darkness and nothingness. Else why is it, that the high and glorious aspirations, which leap like angels from the temple of our hearts, are ever wandering abroad unsatisfied? Why is it that the rainbow and the cloud come over us with a beauty that is not of earth, and then pass off, and leave us to muse upon their faded loveliness? Why is it that stars, which hold their festivals around the midnight throne, are set above the grasp of our limited faculties—forever mocking us with their unapproachable glory! And why is it, that bright forms of human beauty are presented to our view and then taken from us, leaving the thousand currents of our affection to flow back in an Alpine torrent upon our hearts? We are born for a far higher destiny than that of earth. There is a realm where the rainbow never fades, where the stars will be spread out before us, like islands that slumber on the ocean—and where the beautiful beings which here pass before us like visions, will stay in our presence forever.

◆

A SINCERE confession of our ignorance is one of the fairest and surest testimonies of our judgment.

CHARLIE.

BY MARY FORREST.

Our hearts had nursed an angel, and we knew
It not. The light within his clustered curls,
Living and changing, caught its golden gleam
From out the stars: a mystic halo, left
In token of his origin, and so
It ever thrilled us. We had questioned oft
The strange, unuttered language of his eyes—
The earnest and far-reaching gaze, that gave,
At times, so little heed to us—nor dreamed
That it was seeking out his native home;
That those transparent depths lay, even then,
Bathed in the blue of heaven's eternal hills,
And hushed and mournful in the soft reflex
Of winged ethereal beauty. "*Ours*," we said,
And gloried in this cherub-boy, as he
Had been a costly gem our earthly hands
Had power to close upon; a thing of hope
And never-fading brightness, which our hearts,
Our weak and mortal hearts, had room to shrine
And worship. God forgive us! We have seen
Our idol broken! We have watched the pure
And softened light go out from eyes all wild
With anguish; we have heard the stifled cry
Of an imprisoned soul, as, one by one,
The links of clay fell from its weary wing.
Oh, stricken mother! 'twas a blessed loan,
Your bright, angelic boy. Thank heaven, you lived
To know his heart of innocence; to clasp,
E'en for a time, his fair-haired beauty. You
Were all his care; each thought, his very soul,
Concentred in your presence. "Ma'ma!" 'Twas
The last low tone that thrilled us from his lip
Of consciousness; and when his failing strength
Had stilled his utterance, how wonderful
The look of deep, undying love, that still,
In purest eloquence, discerned and blessed
His mother!
You have folded his pale hands
And twined once more for aye his gleaming hair;
And they have laid away your darling boy,
Deeply and darkly, to his lonely sleep;
But list! the low, sweet music is prolonged.
"Ma'ma!" is echoing in the rosy bowers
Of Paradise. Lift up your bleeding heart,
And feel this cherub presence as a link
Between your yearning life and God's pure throne.

THE BELL OF THE DEAD.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

Perhaps there is no one idea that the living man contemplates with greater horror than that of being buried alive. We know that we all have to die—that, rich or poor, old or young, great or small, we all have, sooner or later, to meet the grim King of Terrors and depart to the land of spirits—but though in health we sometimes pass in review all the agonies of dissolution and consider all the chances of sudden violence or lingering suffering, yet the mind seems capable of fortifying itself against every possible trial except that of awaking to the knowledge that we are already buried—that our friends, believing us dead, have already taken their eternal leave of our mortal form and consigned it to the cold, lonely grave—the thought of returning life in the tomb, being the only horror from which both religion and philosophy shrink powerless and appalled.

In some parts of Germany, such is the general dread of being buried alive, that a wise system of precaution against this premature act is in vogue, by which more than one person has been restored to life and friends after being mourned as dead. The plan is, for the corpse to be placed in a comfortable apartment, with face uncovered, and with a cord or wire attached to the hands in such a manner that the slightest movement will cause the tinkling of a little bell in an adjoining apartment, where some one is always on the watch till there are either signs of life or decomposition gives the assurance of hopeless death. This custom has led to some striking scenes and curious revelations, and one of the most remarkable of these we are now about to put on record, as we received it not long since from the lips of the narrator.

"I had two bosom companions who came to America with me," (says our informant,) "and we three were nearly always together when our circumstances would permit. We were not alike in scarcely any particular, and for this reason perhaps we liked each other all the better. We differed on nearly every point in science, art, literature, philosophy and religion, and argued every point we differed on. On one thing, however, we did agree, and that was the possibility of being buried alive, and the unutterable horror which must attend the subsequent consciousness of the fact. So in health we solemnly pledged ourselves, that if either was within reach of another at the time of the supposed decease of either, the living should faithfully watch by the senseless form till the return of life or the certainty of death.

"My younger friend, Adolph Hofer, was the first to go. We attended him in his last illness, and conversed with him on the future state. He was a believer in the immortality of the soul, and the identity of the spirit with that occupying the mortal tenement. In other words, he believed that the man himself undergoes no other change by death than being released from his earthly tabernacle, to roam at will through space—to leave earth and return to it—that he carries his affections, reason, knowledge and passions with him, and is in every respect the same as in the mortal body, with the exception of what directly pertains to the animal portion of him. As I have before remarked, we both differed from him in many particulars, and from each other in quite as many; but as we had reason to fear that he was a dying man, we now carefully avoided a discussion that would probably have resulted in more injury than benefit, and for once permitted him to express his religious opinions unquestioned.

"'But though I believe man's spirit is freed from his body at the moment of death,' he went on to say, 'and has the power to visit distant planets and return to his friends on earth and take cognizance of temporal affairs, yet I by no means get rid of the horror of being buried alive, which is as terrible to my fancy as to yours, and must be my apology for reminding you of our solemn compact in regard to whoever remains longest on earth.'

"We assured him that for himself he need have no fear of premature interment, as we should watch with him, together or alternately, till convalescence or the certain commencement of dissolution.

"'I have a presentiment,' he continued, 'that I shall not recover, and as I have no very near kin in this country, I have already made my will, dividing my effects between you. In the large chest there in the corner, you will find the will, and all my money, jewelry and so forth—but it is my wish that nothing shall be touched till after the funeral, and that my body may remain in this apartment till coffined for the tomb.'

"He went much further into detail than is necessary for me to relate, enough being thus repeated for a clear understanding of what followed.

"Adolph Hofer was confined to his bed for four weeks, and then died like one falling asleep, conscious till within a couple of hours of his spirit's flight. It was a sad moment for Carl Heilstein and myself when we found that our bosom friend had ceased to be one of us, and I am not ashamed to say we wept like children. Of course we made our arrangements for watching the corpse according to our compact, but without the slightest hope of ever seeing another spark of life in that loved form.

"It was on the second night after the death of Hofer, that Carl and I were sitting in an adjoining apartment, conversing about the deceased and his religious belief. We had attached a small cord to the fingers of the corpse, and connected it with a little bell close to us, so that we could be warned of any movement, without being obliged to remain beside the body, which for various reasons would not have been agreeable to us.

"'If Adolph's ideas in regard to the future state are correct,' observed Carl, in the course of his remarks, 'there is no certainty that he may not now be with us, even in this room.'

"'Yes,' returned I, '*if* they are correct, which I do not believe. When a man dies, he is dead, at least so far as this world is concerned.'

"'That is your opinion, Jules,' said Carl, 'but opinions don't make facts.'

"'It may fairly be presumed they are based on facts, when they cannot be reasonably controverted. If man exists after death as a roving spirit, give me some evidence of it, and then ask me to believe.'

"'And what about ghosts?' said Carl, who was both skeptical and superstitious—and he glanced furtively and timidly around the room as he spoke, as if he half expected to encounter some fearful apparition.

"'Bah!' exclaimed I, contemptuously—'you know my opinion of ghosts and hobgoblins—that they have no existence except in the brains of timid fools.'

"At this moment we heard, or fancied we heard, a strange noise in the apartment which contained the corpse. We suddenly held our breaths and listened, looking inquiringly at each other. Carl's face grew white as a sheet, and I confess I felt less at ease than I wished to have appear. For nearly a minute all remained perfectly still, and I was about to take up the light and go into the room of the dead, when the sudden whirring and striking of an old-fashioned clock, caused me to start perceptibly. Slowly and solemnly—ding, ding, ding—the iron hammer tolled out the midnight hour, and, with the last ringing vibration, a strange and unaccountable feeling of awe and dread stole over me.

"'What was it?' inquired Carl, in a timid whisper.

"'Nothing,' replied I, rousing myself, with a full determination to shake off what I conceived to be a foolish fancy. 'Are we men or children, to get frightened at the noise of a rat?'

"Hush! hark! I hear something still!' whispered Carl, now fairly trembling with fear.

"'Then, if there is anything, we must know *what* it is!' said I, as I rose and took up the light, for the purpose of going to look at the corpse. 'Will you accompany me, or shall I go alone?'

"Carl Heilstein slowly and silently arose, as one who felt called upon to perform a fearful duty; but scarcely had he got upon his feet, when the little bell connected with the dead was rung violently.

"My nervous system never received such a shock before or since. It seemed for the moment as if I was paralyzed. The light dropped from my hand and was extinguished, and great beads of perspiration stood all over me.

"But I remained inactive only for the time it would take one to count ten. Reasoning that my friend had come to life and needed immediate assistance, I hastily procured another light, and, merely glancing at Carl, who had fallen back upon his seat, white and helpless from his sudden fright, I rushed into the apartment of the corpse, expecting to find Adolph living, if not actually sitting up or standing.

"To my utter amazement, however, I found only the dead form of my friend—cold, rigid, motionless. There was such an inflexible look of death on the features, that I could not believe there was a single spark of life in the body, and a close examination of lips and heart proved there was none in reality. And yet the hands had been moved and were drawn to one side, but rather as if jerked there by the bell-cord, which was hanging somewhat loose, than as if stirred by any internal power.

"But what had moved the hands and rung the bell? this was the startling mystery. The room was not large, contained no great amount of furniture, and was easily searched. I had just passed the light under the bed and around and behind everything, when Carl appeared at the door, pale, trembling, and covered with a cold, clammy perspiration.

"'Is he alive!' he rather gasped than said.

"'No,' I replied, 'nor has there been any life in him since his breath went out.'

"'Merciful God!' he ejaculated, nervously grasping a chair for support—'what rung the bell then?'

"'That is the mystery I am trying to solve,' said I. 'It is possible there may be some person concealed in here.'

"I cautiously opened the door of a long, deep closet as I spoke, in which hung the clothes of the deceased, and went in and examined it thoroughly. No other human being was there, and nothing had been disturbed. There were no outlets to the room except the door communicating with the apartment in which we had been watching, and two windows looking out upon a lawn, and the sashes were closed and curtains drawn, showing no signs of recent disturbance. I then re-examined the room, and particularly the bed, but without making any new discovery.

"'This is all very strange!' said I, half-musingly and looking inquiringly at Carl—'very strange indeed!'

"'It must have been something supernatural!' he replied, in a hollow whisper; and moving over to the chest in the corner, he sank down upon it.

"As he did so, the sharp click of the spring-lock caused him to bound up as if shot. For a moment or two he stood trembling, and then said, with more nerve:

"'I believe I am a cowardly fool, to be scared at everything! I do not fear anything human though,' he added, 'but this unearthly business unmans me.'

"I now re-examined the corpse, to be sure there were no signs of life in it, and found not only death there, but the beginning of decomposition. Perfectly assured of this, we went into the other apartment and sat down, to watch through the remainder of the night and ponder the mystery. Scarcely were we seated, before we fancied we heard dull, muffled sounds in the dead-room, followed by something like a smothered human groan. Carl's teeth now fairly chattered with terror, and I confess I never felt less courageous in my life. These strange noises only continued for a short time, and gradually died away into silence, after which we were disturbed no more.

"In the proper course of time our friend was buried; and the day after the funeral we proceeded to open his strong box or chest according to his direction. Then it was that our supernatural mystery had a natural but horrible explanation:

"*In that chest was the black and decaying corpse of one we had known in life.*

"The following is our conjecture:

"Cognizant of Adolph Hofer's money and jewels, of their place of deposit, and of our mode of watching the dead, he had, on that eventful night, entered the dead-room through a window at an early hour, and concealed himself in the closet till midnight, and then set about his work of robbery. Some accidental noise, having alarmed us, as he could tell from our conversation, he had, either in his haste to secrete himself, or intentionally to frighten us still more, rung the bell in the manner stated, and then got into the chest, which had a powerful spring-lock. My friend Carl, by accidentally sitting down on this, had sealed his doom; and his subsequent groans, and terrible efforts to burst from his narrow prison, were the strange noises which had so disturbed us the second time. The man's death was a fearful retribution, and the discovery of his dead body spoiled an otherwise wonderful ghost story.

TRUST.

BY MRS. JOHN C. WINANS.

Say, shall we grow faithless because of storms?
We are launched upon a sea of strife,
And shuddering waves uprise against;
We battle with their turmoil throughout life.

Few of His chosen glide in soft repose
O'er mirrored waters. Billows will roll,
And wreck, and blast, dash fearfully around,
And mountain surges sweep across the soul.

Hope flourishes a moment and then dies;
New-planned pleasures scarce survive a day;
Heart-pageants ride a buoyant wave awhile,
And then dismaying winds bear them away.

What then! perchance there comes a peaceful lull,
And shining sunbeams light life's dusky air;
Perchance sweet strains and pleasant sights forego
Their rapid flight and lift us from despair.

What then! O, choose the adverse gales, and trust;
Thus into heaven is the spirit led—
Only thro' shelving seas and breakers' roar,
Shall ye reach Him, the Holy One hath said.

What then! at rest—no frightful whirlpools there;
All floods, all glooms forever passed away;
That haven gained, the sore-tried soul shall dwell
Where light divine makes one eternal day.

KENNETH CLYDE'S FIRST LOVE.

BY AMY RANDOLPH.

The hazy veil of Indian Summer lay like a golden mist over the quiet old forests, that sweet November afternoon, as the quick tread of Kenneth Clyde's horse rustled through the fallen leaves that literally carpeted the secluded road. And the young man let the reins fall carelessly on Selim's arched neck, as he looked with a thrill of admiration at the panorama of purple hills that stretched along the clear horizon, like islets floating in a sea of golden air.

"Now if I were an artist," quoth Kenneth to himself, "I should be worrying my brains how to transfer that lovely sky to canvas—but as I'm nothing of the kind I can enjoy it without any professional drawbacks. Gently, Selim—gently, old fellow—that was a sharp turn in the road! Let me see—I shall have plenty of time to reach Whitestone before dark, I think. Wonder what time it is—only four o'clock, and——"

But the half-shaped thought never came to completion in Kenneth Clyde's mind. At the very instant in which he glanced at his watch, Selim, terrified by the swift apparition of a velvet-backed rabbit darting across the road, gave a sudden sidelong swerve, and Kenneth Clyde remembered nothing more.

And the shadows stretched longer and longer through the golden aisles of the woods, and the bright-eyed squirrels eyed him suspiciously from their mossy heights, and the birds kept up their low-voiced twittering, while he lay there, stunned and motionless! Ah, Selim, that was an ungenerous trick to serve your trusting rider!

When he waked to consciousness, with a dull, heavy throbbing in his head, and a sharp pain in his left arm, he was in a snug, low-ceiled room, with stars shining in through the red-curtained windows, and a crackling fire blazing on two gigantic brass fire-dogs, just in front of the broad chintz-covered lounge on which he lay. And clearly outlined against the genial blaze was a pretty head with braids of hair knotted low at the back, and black-lashed eyes thoughtfully fixed upon the fire.

"I wonder how I came here!" was Kenneth's vague reflection. "I wonder who *she* is! And I wonder—confound that shooting pain in my arm—I remember it all now!"

He uttered a slight groan as some trivial movement caused him an acute pang of anguish.

"Aunt Patty—he is opening his eyes," said the pretty vision by the fire, springing to her feet, and speaking of him, as though he were not eagerly listening to every word!

"Gracious sakes alive!" ejaculated Mrs. Patty Brewster, trotting nimbly in, with a colossal camphor bottle in one hand and a bowl of sage tea in the other. "Well, it's a real marcy, aint it, that you happened to be out arter mosses, and found him in the woods, Mary. Lie still now," she added to Kenneth, who was grimacing vainly against the smoking sage tea, "and take your medicine, that's a dear!"

"I don't think he likes it, aunt Patty," interposed the young girl.

"Well, it'll do him good," persisted the old dame.

"*I'll* give it to him, aunty—you see if the doctor aint coming," said the younger lady, taking the bowl from Mrs. Brewster's hands. Aunt Patty bustled away and Miss Mary quietly turned the contents of the formidable blue bowl out of the window, her bright eyes brimming with mirth as they met Kenneth's grateful glance.

"Don't you think it has done you good already?" she asked, with admirable gravity.

"It think it has," responded Kenneth, solemnly.

And when Mrs. Patty returned, she nodded approvingly at the empty bowl, remarking that "sage tea was wonderful quietin'!"

Kenneth lay there, watching the young girl's graceful motions with languid interest—nay, he found himself observing the very bow of blue ribbon at her throat, and the azure belt that circled her slender waist, and wondering how her hands happened to be so wondrously small and well-shaped! To be sure, it was none of his business; but then he had nothing else to think of.

It was nearly a month before the doctor would allow him to mount Selim again, for a slight fever followed his fall and exposure; but, contrary to his usual custom, our hero took no exceptions to the Esculapian fiat, and resigned himself with marvelous philosophy to the seclusion of the sick room! And what came of it all, our readers may glean for themselves from a little conversation that took place the day of Kenneth Clyde's final departure.

He was sitting musingly before the fire, in the clear morning sunshine, when the door opened, and the young lady with the black lashes came in.

"Some letters for you, Kenneth," she said, extending a little hand, freighted with epistolary treasures.

But instead of peacefully possessing himself of the letters, he took hand and all, and gently drew the resisting damsel to a seat beside him.

"Sit down there, Mary,—I haven't seen you for a whole hour," he said, with an air of audacious authority.

"Let go my hand then," said Mary; but he didn't! "Tell me who your letters are from," she added.

"This is from my uncle, Miss Curiosity; he thinks it high time his lingering nephew returned to the 'halls of his childhood'—wishes me to mingle in general society this winter, and——Hallo! what's this—'the young heiress he has so often mentioned to me, Miss Vernon, will be in town staying at Mrs. Clerington's: he hopes I will at least enter the lists for this charming prize!' By his leave, I shall do nothing of the sort! Don't look at me with such wistful, mournful eyes, dearest! I was wrong to allow you to see the letter, for my uncle knows nothing of the precious treasure I have won among these woods!"

"And will you really love the little country girl as truly as ever, in all that atmosphere of wealth and gaiety?" she asked almost sadly.

"Can you doubt me, dear love? What is Miss—Miss, What's-her-name to me? Do you suppose all her money-bags are worth one of your smiles? Nay, there is that doubtful look again! Mary, I wish you would let me take you back as my cherished *wife!*"

"No," she said, quietly; "next spring will be quite soon enough. Only, Kenneth, I feel an absolute certainty that you will, sooner or later, marry that heiress."

"NEVER!" said Clyde, with resolute determination.

It was one of the clearest and coldest of January nights—the stars all winking in the freezing concave of heaven, and the winds whistling down the gaslighted thoroughfares of New York—when Kenneth Clyde sat reading in the library of his uncle's luxurious dwelling.

"Come, my boy—it's high time we were *en route* for Mrs. Clerington's," exclaimed a brisk, cheerful voice, and Mr. Jones Clyde entered the room. He stopped short in dismay at the sight of his nephew in dressing-gown and cigar. "Not ready yet? what does this mean?"

"I had concluded to remain at home, uncle!" said Kenneth, lazily lifting his handsome eyes.

"Nonsense—pshaw!" ejaculated the old gentleman. "Go and dress—it won't take you five minutes, and I'm particularly anxious that you should accompany me this evening. Miss Vernon is to be there, you know!"

"That's the very reason I had wished to remain at home, uncle. I do not desire to become acquainted with the popular heiress."

"And why not, young man, I'd like to know?"

"Because, uncle, all the love I have to bestow is in the keeping of Mary Tracy; and, as you wish to introduce me to Miss Vernon as an aspirant to her hand and fortune, I think it well to forewarn you that it is utterly useless. I love Mary Tracy, and intend to marry her!"

Mr. Jones Clyde twisted his white gloves wrathfully round and round.

"My dear boy, you'll get over that fancy of yours in a few weeks! I wish Selim's neck had been broken before he galloped you into such a confounded entanglement! Be reasonable! be sensible!"

"I *am* both, uncle!"

"But you *must* go with me to-night. Mrs. Clerington specially asked me to bring you, and I promised that I would. For *my* sake, Kenneth!"

"Well, sir, if it is really essential to your happiness—but I give you notice that I shall avoid Miss Vernon as systematically as etiquette will allow!"

And so the old gentleman had his way, after all.

As Kenneth Clyde sauntered through the crowd that thronged Mrs. Clerington's handsome rooms, it would have been difficult to find a better type of utter indifference and ennui than his countenance presented. How gladly he would *have exchanged the delicious music of the band for the chirping of the cricket in Mrs. Patty Brewster's chimney corner—the blazing chandelier for the flickering fire-light!* At length Mrs. Clerington laid her jeweled fan on his arm.

"Mr. Clyde, I want to present you to Miss Vernon."

"If Miss Vernon would only excuse me!" he said, with a slight shrug of his shoulders.

"Out of the question, recreant cavalier!" said his hostess, gaily. "I have promised to bring you to her; come!"

And she led him through one or two rooms to a quiet little apartment, where a single gas-light shone softly through a white glass shade. There was only one lady in the semi-twilight of the room, and she stood by the mantel, her face half averted.

"Miss Vernon—Mr. Clyde!" pronounced Mrs. Clerington, in low, distinct tones—and vanished.

The lady turned full towards him—her cheek flushed, and her lips dimpled with half-repressed smiles.

"Kenneth!"

"Mary!"

The reader need not expect a verbatim et literatim account of the next five minutes' proceedings!

"But, Mary," said Kenneth, when he had satisfied himself that the lovely vision in the diamonds and white tulle was really the black-lashed beauty of the farm-house, and that no deception had been practised on his senses, "they told me you were Miss Vernon!"

"So I am—my name is Mary Tracy Vernon."

"But how——"

"How did I happen to play *bella incognita?* I will tell you. Aunt Patty is no relative—only my dear old nurse; and the freak seized me to go there, last autumn, instead of joining Mrs. Clerington's party on a tour through Canada. I would not let Aunt Patty tell you who I was, and accordingly ignored my last name, for I was *so* tired of being 'Miss Vernon.' Set that down as another freak if you like! Now, dear Kenneth," she added, with a sudden change from arch independence to bashful penitence, that was irresistibly charming, "you will not scold me for cheating you just a little? Indeed, I'll never be naughty again!"

For answer, he only drew her closer to his breast.

"I told you I was certain you would marry 'the heiress,'" said Mary, saucily. "But you have avoided Miss Vernon so completely that I began to be afraid I should never see you again!"

Mr. Jones Clyde was considerably astonished, about an hour subsequently, when he came into the room, and found his nephew and the heiress on such excellent terms; but he soon comprehended matters, with a little explanation from Mrs. Clerington.

The Gordian knot of difficulties was cut, and Kenneth Clyde married his "first love" after all.

HABITS.

Like flakes of snow that fall unperceived upon the earth, the seemingly unimportant events of life succeed one another. As the snow gathers together, so are our habits formed. No single flake that is added to the pile produces a sensible change. No single action creates, however it exhibit, a man's character; but as the tempest hurls the avalanche down the mountain, and overwhelms the inhabitant and his habitation, so passion, acting upon the elements of mischief which pernicious habits have brought together by imperceptible accumulation, may overthrow the edifice of truth and virtue.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

IN Dante's journey through hell he found a set of people who were suddenly taken up by a fierce wind and borne about at its will without any of their own; they never knew when this wind was coming, but they could not rest long—it always came. These might have been holders of public office—this wind the breath of party.

HAVE nothing in your dress or furniture so fine that you cannot afford to spoil it and get another like it, yet to preserve the harmonies throughout your person and dwelling.

CHOOSE a clergyman of cheerful spirit. If you can get along with people who carry a certificate in their faces that their goodness is so great as to make them very miserable, your children cannot.

VICTOR HUGO says, it is woe to a man to leave behind him a shadow which has his form. It is not strange then that a man is sometimes afraid of his own shadow.

THE prospect of a hereafter defines itself in life here, faintly but determinately, as a landscape mirrors itself in a lake.

THE mountain summit sublimes its stillness before us, an awe of draped majesty, a stalagmite of eternity.

PEOPLE neither acute nor profound often say the thing without effort, which we want and have long been hunting for in vain.

THE great sin is limitation. As soon as you once come up with a man's limitations, it is all over with him.

WE don't wear ear-rings as the women do, but the dear creatures often bore our ears as if they thought we ought to.

THE best pill in the world is a grain of common sense, but it is not to be bought at the apothecary's, for it is not a drug in the market.

NOTHING is more impoverishing than an injudicious pursuit of wealth. Thousands of searchers after the philosopher's stone have died beggars.

NOTHING so adorns the face as cheerfulness. When the heart is in flower, its bloom and beauty pass to the features.

THERE is nothing so bad as the slave of despondency when he attempts to dance in the chains of rhyme.

THE round of a passionate man's life is in contracting debts in his passion which his virtue obliges him to pay.

WOMAN should be protected by man as the rose is guarded by its thorn, the honey defended by the bee.

THE roots of home catch at the centre of the earth, and blossom over a cottage door in sight of heaven.

SOUR people should be hung on sour apple trees; crabbed ones on crab-apple trees.

IF a fierce fanatic finds people cold to his peculiar doctrine, he is for warming them to it at the stake.

A SOLDIER saves his own life by slaying his enemies. He kills for a living.

IN uttering a great thought, use no word that doesn't weigh a pound.

EMBRACE as many opportunities as you please, but only one woman.

EVERY unmarried lady of forty has passed the Cape of Good Hope.

INNOCENCE is no security against temptation; it is exactly what temptation conquers.

IT takes but a rough tailor to fit a man with a suit of tar and feathers.

WE may be in far better health to-day than we were yesterday, but we are nearer dissolution.

SUCCESS is not genuine merit, but it is a good counterfeit.

A CLOCK or a watch is all the better for being a second-hand timepiece.

TEMPERANCE is a Rarey that may be always relied on to tame the night-mare.

THE form which God's providence on earth oftenest takes is that of a good woman.

SORROWS grow less and less every time they are told—like a lady's age.

MEN are never so easily deceived as when they are plotting to deceive others.

CURRENT ITEMS

A LITTLE boy, about three years of age, whose parents reside in Thirty-fourth street, was drowned in a bath-tub one day lately. On being missed, search was made for him, and after a while his corpse was found floating in the bath-tub, which was full of water. He was grasping in his hand a little stick which he had been in the habit of playing with as his boat, and it was supposed that the poor little fellow had fallen into the tub in trying to reach too far for this plaything.

THOMAS HARSER, a coachman, was kicked to death by his horses, one day not long since, he having fallen, while intoxicated, from his seat on the coach against the heels of the animals, which were tied to a hitching post in front of a house, where he had driven his mistress. It seems that he had got down and tied the horses, and was climbing to his seat again, when the accident occurred. The horses kicked and stamped his head to a jelly.

A PILE of bricks in Fulton street tumbled down one day not long since, and seriously injured a person who was passing at the time. We have often wondered why the authorities allow bricks to be piled up in lofty, toppling heaps, in our busiest thoroughfares, which are liable to tumble upon the passers-by at any moment.

As a number of rough young men were scuffling in the Park, one day recently, one of them crouched down behind another, and a third pushed the one who was standing, backwards over the croucher with such force as to knock him senseless when he struck the frozen ground, and the unfortunate young man was taken in an insensible condition to the hospital.

FOUR or five rowdies in Brooklyn attacked a couple of soldiers who were quietly and inoffensively passing along the streets one evening, and attempted to maltreat them, but the soldiers at once "carried the war into Africa," and made such havoc among their assailants, that the latter ignominiously fled.

A YOUNG man, while eating his dinner in a down-town restaurant the other day, got a piece of beef stuck in his throat, and came near choking to death; but there fortunately happened to be a physician in the room who got the beef out of the young man's throat in time to save his life.

EUGENE MOLATRAIX, who had been engaged as a cook on a steamboat, but had been discharged on account of his bad temper, attempted to stab his successor, but was himself stabbed instead, and would perhaps have been killed, had not some of the steamboat hands come to his rescue. He was taken to the hospital.

SEVERAL young ladies went out to drive alone, in the Central Park, one day recently, but not being able to manage their horses, they got into difficulties and dangers, a couple of them being upset in the Seventh avenue, and seriously injured.

A MAN fell from the top of a Broadway omnibus, one evening not long since, and striking upon his head on the pavement, his skull was fractured, and he was injured so badly that he died in the course of the next day.

EIGHT or ten boys were playing on a large log, in a slip on the East river, one morning recently, and while in the height of their enthusiasm they all tumbled into the water, and two of them came near drowning, one of whom it took about half-an-hour to resuscitate.

A SAILOR, employed on a schooner lying in port, fell from the masthead one day recently, and striking upon and across a large box, that was standing on the deck, his arm and one of his ribs were broken, and he was otherwise severely injured.

A LITTLE girl, about four years of age, was very badly scalded, the other morning, by upsetting a pitcher of hot water upon her head and breast, as she was trying to pull it off the breakfast table.

A SAIL-BOAT, containing two young men, was capsized in the bay, the other day, and the young men came near being drowned, but were finally rescued by a boat that was sent off from a schooner in the vicinity.

AN intoxicated man attempted to cross Broadway, between Liberty and Cedar Streets, one day lately, and getting entangled among horses and vehicles, he was knocked down, trampled upon and badly injured.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER. EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 1863.

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THE ARCH-BLUNDER.

BY EDWARD EVERETT.

The wages of sin is death, but in cases of great national wrong, Providence sometimes lets the account run for a long time,—

> Like poison given to work a great time after.

It was centuries before the overgrown landed estates, to which Pliny ascribes the ruin of Italy, effected that object. In other cases, the crime is so monstrous and unnatural, that it comes "birth-strangled" into the world, with shame on the forehead and death at the heart. It is then a blunder as well as a crime, and of all the blunders ever committed by ambitious and unprincipled men, that of secession is the most stupendous.

To gain a plausible pretext in the eyes of mankind for breaking up a frame of Government,—the most happily constituted fabric of political wisdom which the world had seen,—and one of which the administration, by the patient acquiescence of the North, had been all but monopolized by herself, the right of an individual State to secede from the Union was passionately asserted by the South. The plea was really of no value unless unanimously admitted. While twenty-three States denied the right of individual secession, the strong presumption must, in the absence of a common arbiter, be against the eleven that affirmed it. Practically, therefore, the right of secession resolves itself into the right of revolution. But that right, though undoubted, so far from being an absolute and unqualified right, as the orators and journalists of England pretend, for the sake of putting the North in the wrong, has no moral foundation except in cases of oppression so intolerable as to justify war with all its crimes and woes. In all other cases the right of *suppressing the rebellion (for till it succeeds revolution is rebellion) is just as clear on the part of the Government*. The idea that there is, either on the principles of morality or of Public Law, an unqualified right, on the part of any and every subdivision of a People, to throw off by force their allegiance to the Government under which they live, and establish their independence, is one of the wildest crudities of the day. It is undoubtedly true, that all governments rest on the consent of the governed, but this is no more the case in Republican America than in Royal England or Imperial France; and whenever a portion of the governed undertake to revolt against the constitutional government established over the whole, they do it at their peril, morally and politically, as much in one country as in another.

But it is not at this time my purpose to dwell upon Secession as a theoretical absurdity. As a practical blunder, at once the most gross and fatal which the world ever witnessed, it demands our present attention. It rests upon a pretended right, inherent in the Constitution of a sovereign State, to secede at pleasure from any Union, into which it may have entered. It forgets that even if the Constitution of the State originally implied such a right (for it is not alleged that it is expressed), it was extinguished by the voluntary adoption of a frame of government, one of whose express fundamental principles is, that it shall be the supreme law of the land, "ANYTHING (right of Secession or anything else) in the Constitution or laws of any of the States to the contrary notwithstanding." But although there is a self-contradiction in the very formula of the right of Secession, on the part of a State which has joined a union under such a Constitution, the South has laid down that imaginary right as the basis of her revolution. This I call a blunder of the first magnitude on her part, for, besides being a poison, taken at the birth, to work, a great time after, it lays her, at the very outset of her attempted national existence, at the feet of the maritime powers of Europe; the victim alike of their arts and arms, of their power and their policy.

That this is no imaginary statement of the result of the doctrine of Secession is already seen in the progress of events. Their recently intercepted despatches show the indecent panic into which the Confederate government was thrown a few months since, by the fancied discovery of an intrigue, on the part of France, to induce the State of Texas to *secede*. The Confederate President, well informed by his Secretary, if not cognizant of it himself, that it was the "traditional policy" of a numerous and influential party in Texas to establish her separate independence, and undertake the conquest of the Northern provinces of Mexico, was frightened from his propriety by the information, that a couple of superserviceable vice-consuls of France had asked the Governor and one of the Senators of that State, whether her welfare would not be promoted by a separate independence. To all appearance his mind was then, for the first time, struck by the suicidal logic of Secession. He then saw, as probably never before, that he was on the point of being "hoist with his own petar." Let but half a dozen uneasy spirits at Austin and Galveston play the same game that was played in the winter of 1860–1861 at Charleston, Montgomery, and Richmond, and Texas, under the auspices of the Emperor of the French, secedes from the Confederacy. Remember she is "a sovereign State," and has a perfect right to do it. Remember it is the "traditionary policy" of France, to prevent her annexation to the Union, and of this you are so well persuaded that, without a moment's hesitation, you impute this paltry intrigue to the Emperor of the French, and direct your emissary at Paris to catechize him on the subject. Remember what your Secretary of State knows a good deal better than he has yet been willing to confess, that nothing but the aspirations of Gen. Houston to the White House prevented this policy from taking effect in 1844; and now ask yourselves whether, in the light of these facts, there ever was a political blunder equal to that of the South, in attempting to break away from their connection with a great nationality, clothed with a military and naval power which would render any such movement—with or without foreign countenance—as hopeless as it is unconstitutional.

But if Secession was a blunder on the part of the South, the countenance and sympathy which have been extended to it, by the great naval States of Europe, equally deserve that name, both on the part of England and France. When M. Guizot, in 1844, stated the reasons why it was the interest of France that Texas should not be annexed to the United States, those reasons resolved themselves into the expediency of preserving what he called the American Equilibrium,—that is a balance between the three great American Powers, viz.: the British Provincial dominions, the United States, and the Spanish American governments. He thought this equilibrium would be disturbed by the progress of the United States Southward. This was before the Mexican War, the annexation of Texas, and the acquisition of California. If before these events the preservation of this American equilibrium was deemed the true policy of France by the Government of Louis Philippe in 1844, it is not to be wondered at, that after the great territorial acquisitions of the United States just named, the Emperor of the French should entertain the views disclosed in his letter to General Forey. It may seem presumptuous in an American to call in question the soundness of any view of French policy, in which Louis Napoleon and Louis Philippe concur. I must, however, think that M. Thiers, in his great speech of the 20th January, 1846, saw more accurately that the true interests of France lay in maintaining, not this newly-imagined equilibrium in America, but the well-recognized and all-important equilibrium of the great maritime and commercial powers of the world,—England, France and the United States. The preservation—rather the creation—of *that* equilibrium is, in truth, the "traditionary policy" of France, as it is the true interest of every continental power of Europe. Russia, whose immense territorial and military resources place her in importance on a level with the great maritime powers, saw this, when in the remarkable letter of Prince Gortschakoff of the 10th July, 1861, she pronounced the American Union an "essential element of the universal political equilibrium." Napoleon I. saw it, when he offered us Louisiana, in 1803. The government of Louis XVI. saw it, when it sent its armies and navies to aid us in establishing our independence; and of all the errors in policy, which it is now in the power of the government of France to commit, none can be imagined more ominous of disastrous consequences to her, than one which should lead her to aid in breaking down the United States, as a leading maritime power. Regarding them as the great extra-European counterbalance to the supremacy of the seas which England still claims, and which has at times borne so heavily on France, it would be just as wise in the latter power to strip the plates from her iron-clad ships, and to lay up their hulks to rot at Brest or Toulon, as to assist in breaking up the North American Union into rival and fragmentary powers, exhausting each other by eternal border wars, and compelled in that way to abdicate their position as a great maritime State. *For this reason, France, in her prompt recognition of the so-called Confederate States as belligerents, and in the hopes which* she has allowed them to form of an early recognition as an independent government, has sacrificed her true traditionary policy to a momentary pressure on her commerce, and has committed an error, of which, if persisted in, she will feel all the gravity in the first European War.

But the error committed by England, in pursuing the same course toward the seceding States, is not less manifest and grave than it is in the case of France. The idea of an equilibrium between the great powers of the earth implies, in any philosophical or practical conception of it, equal and reciprocal advantages. It is not a combination of the rest of the powers to keep down one, which they may think formidable to all the others; it is an equitable balance between all, for the safety of each and the preservation of the peace of the world. The ruling classes of England have accordingly made a great mistake in thinking that it is, in any respect, for their interest to substitute a discordant group of warring States for the powerful and prosperous Union, whose commerce has been a thousand-fold more valuable to her than the utmost stretch of Colonial taxation; which has received and fed the starving surplus of her population; and which, with a systematic abnegation of interference in foreign politics, asks nothing—never asked anything—but justice, of her or any other European power. So numerous and intimate are the ties that unite us, so closely interwoven our interests, that it is just as much for the welfare of England as of ourselves, that the States of the Union should live in harmony and peace with each other. Mr. D'Israeli says that we are destined to break up into an America of armies, of diplomacy, of turbulence and wars. Will that state of things promote the exportation of corn or cotton to England, or the importation to America of their equivalents in British fabrics? No. When the Alabama sailed from Liverpool to plunder, burn and sink the lawful commerce of the United States, she sailed on an errand just as injurious to England as to us. The illicit traffic with which, in defiance of the Queen's proclamation, the cupidity of her merchants is feeding the Confederacy, though protected, as far as the law of nations permits, by her government with as much jealousy as the most meritorious branch of her commerce, is, in its tendency and effect, as prejudicial to her as to the United States. This, it is true, England does not now see. But how long can she, however much disposed to do so, shut her eyes on the passing events in Mexico? Is it for the interest of Great Britain, I will not say that Texas should establish her independence under the auspices of France, but that France should possess herself of Mexico, if that is indeed the policy disclosed in the letter to General Forey? That letter states, in substance, that it is not for the interest of France that the United States should absorb the Spanish American States and threaten the Antilles. We quite agree in that opinion, and never wish to gain another square inch of territory North or South. If it comes to us through the paths of peace, by the voluntary cession of the governments, and with the unforced consent of the peoples, there is an expansive virtue in the Constitution of the United States adequate to its adoption and incorporation into the Union. But no patriotic American statesman desires the extension of our territory in whatever direction by any other instrumentality. But how does England read the letter to General Forey? Is it or *her* interest that France should complete the conquest of Mexico, and establish, if not her sovereignty, at least her *suzeraineté* over that magnificent region? Will "the Antilles" be safer with the French at Vera Cruz than they are now? France and Spain may not always be at peace; they are at present far from being of one mind as to this newly inaugurated Mexican policy. Should Mexico be reorganized under the auspices of France, will Cuba be in no danger of falling more completely under her influence than England may wish? France, it is reported, has lately bombarded Acupulco; how will the control of that port, with the exception of San Francisco the best on the Western coast of America, affect the commercial interests of England in the Pacific?

These questions are of no secondary interest to England, as a power that claims to stand at the head of Maritime States, and whose colonial possessions encircle the globe. Not one of these questions would have been raised had not the United States, as a member of the great international family, been paralyzed for the time being by this suicidal and murderous war. It was as much the interest of England, though for different reasons, as of France, to preserve the American equilibrium of M. Guizot. This prudent statesman might, with a show of reason, though, as I think erroneously, consider that equilibrium as endangered by the progress of the United States Southward; but that England should think it for *her* interest that Mexico, and perhaps Texas, should pass under the control of France is truly inconceivable. And yet her statesmen patronize the doctrine of Secession, which, if allowed to prosper, gives Texas to France whenever the Emperor chooses to call into action the party which desires "separate independence;" and in paralyzing the United States, removes an obstacle to the military occupation of Mexico, which, but for our civil war, would have precluded all thought of such an attempt.

I have thus, as I think, shown that, apart from all considerations of constitutional right, the doctrine of Secession, as well on the part of the seceding States, as of the foreign powers which countenance and abet them, is a monstrous political Blunder, and that the government and loyal people of the Union, in combatting that doctrine, are contending not merely for the interests of America, North and South, but also for the true interests of the great rival powers of Europe and of the civilized world.

Boston, 24th February, 1863.

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"THE MAN FOR THE HOUR"—WHY DOES HE NOT APPEAR?

The individual that a great exigency demands and is expected to wake up, has seldom been more anxiously looked for than now. The "coming man"—where lingers he? The "man for the hour"—why does he not appear? The "Providential man," in what covert hides he his much-needed head. The North has urgent occasion for such a phenomenon—and, in fact, for more than one—to mould into patriotic unity, instruct with one purpose and animated with one resolve, its various parties, cliques and factions; to plan its campaigns and to guide its armed legions. We have plenty of "idols of brass with feet of clay," but no man of towering intellect, enthusiastic temperament, indomitable will, and incorruptible honesty—none, we mean, in whom *all* these requisites of greatness are combined. The materials with which such a man could work out the nation's salvation, and that right speedily, are abundant, but the inspiration that should control them and render them resistless is lacking. The day of our tribulation, so far as ruling intelligences are concerned, is a day of small *things*. Even without a master spirit to direct its armies the good cause may in the end prevail, but it will be by *inches*, and at a great further cost of blood and treasure. There are stumblings on the war path. There are cavillings about points *of military etiquette*, while treason is brandishing its sword in the very faces of the cavillers. There is stealing *ad libitum* under the convenient curtain of the war cloud. Strong hands are many, strong heads few. Fortunately Rebellion plunders as well as Patriotism, and we have not to cope with any giant intellect on the other side; but, O! for one of those prodigies that *make destiny*, to finish this war with a *coup de main*. Meanwhile we wait and hope, trusting that Providence in its own good time will bless the Right Cause with the RIGHT MAN!

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OUR BREAD GIFT TO THE STARVING OPERATIVES OF LANCASHIRE.—There are among us those who regret that help has been sent from this country to the starving operatives of Lancashire; but why should that act of generosity be regretted? It is true that the iron founderies and ship-yards of the Clyde resound with the blows of hostile hammers "closing rivets up" on the hulls of Confederate privateers; that our commerce is harassed by British-built vessels, armed with British guns, supplied with stores and coal by British tenders, permitted to sport the British ensign, and manned and officered, in part, by British seamen; that British Colonial ports adjacent to the coast line of the rebel States abet and shelter the freebooters who capture and destroy our merchantmen, and encourage rebel smuggling; that British Colonial authorities deny to our ships of war the "aid and comfort" they freely accord to Southern pirates; that the British press is almost unanimously on the rebel side; that a large majority of both houses of parliament is against us; that the envoys of Southern treason are treated with distinguished consideration by public bodies and public men in the British capital; and, last and worst, that the British government, with "Neutrality" on its hypocritical lips, indirectly connives at these flagrant wrongs against our interests, our flag, and international comity, by neglecting even to censure the wrong-doers. But let us not on that account repent our own magnanimity. The unemployed and suffering spinners and weavers to whom we have sent food are not parties to the hostility and foul-dealing of their government, or to the acts of the shameless miscreants who, under the shield of its indulgence, are making fortunes by playing into the hands of our enemies. On the contrary, those pale, half-famished men, in the midst of their privations, have steadfastly sided with us. They deserve our sympathy, and we should be happy to contribute from our abundance to relieve their necessities.

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COMMODORE VANDERBILT'S HORSES.—We have received from Messrs. Thos. B. Leggett & Co. a very fine engraving of Commodore Vanderbilt's celebrated team of horses, accompanied by a note requesting us to notice it, with which request we cheerfully comply, notwithstanding there has been some rivalry between the Commodore and ourself respecting double teams; but as Mr. Wilkes remarked last summer in the *Spirit of the Times*, "the rivalry between Mr. Bonner and the Commodore has been in all respects a gentlemanly one." We believe we know all the good horses driven on our roads, and we have no hesitation in saying that a finer, better matched, or more stylish pair of horses than the Commodore's "Post Boy" and "Plow Boy" is not owned by any gentleman in New York. They are also very fast. The engraving that Messrs. Leggett & Co. have sent us, (which is printed on tinted paper,) is a very fine specimen of the art, and reflects credit on their enterprise.

THE ROMAN EMPERORS.—No. 4.

BY JOHN S. C. ABBOTT.

TIBERIUS CÆSAR.

Fourteen years before the death of Cæsar Augustus, our Saviour was born in Bethlehem of Judea. Herod, a native of Syria, was at that time the Roman king over that province. He was a man of great abilities, but of execrable character. This was the Herod who ordered the assassination of the babes of Bethlehem. He died a few years after the birth of Christ.

Augustus Cæsar married, as a third wife, Livia Drusilla, the wife of an exiled Roman General, Tiberius. Livia had a son whom she had named, after his father, Tiberius. Cæsar had an only daughter, Julia. By the marriage of the parents these children became, in law, brothers and sisters. They were however subsequently married. Julia became one of the most wicked of women, and conducted so shamefully, that her father, Augustus, ordered her to be divorced from her husband and sent her into exile upon a small island on the coast of Campania. Her father was so indignant at her conduct that he refused ever to see her again.

Upon the death of Augustus, Tiberius ascended the throne. He was then fifty-six years of age. He soon entered upon a career of crime and cruelty which has stamped infamy upon his name. Retiring from Rome, he sought a rural retreat in Campania, a part of the present kingdom of Naples, which was then considered the most delightful climate in the world. At a short distance from the shore was the beautiful island of Caprae. Here Tiberius surrounded himself with all the luxury and voluptuousness which imperial wealth could confer. From these halls of sensual indulgence and almost unearthly splendor, he ruled the empire, by means of spies and other agents, with a rod of iron.

There was an army on the Danube, led by a heroic man by the name of Germanicus. He was the idol of his soldiers. They urged him to assume the crown and march to the dethronement of the tyrant. He indignantly refused. But the eye of Tiberius was upon him. He soon perished, probably of poison. His children were thrown into a dungeon and several of them starved to death. One son chanced to escape this doom. The wife of Germanicus was driven into exile. All who were suspected of favoring the revolt bled upon the scaffold, after having first been exposed to the most terrible tortures. When one, to escape this torture, committed suicide, Tiberius expressed deep regret that the victim had thus escaped him.

The monster was terribly punished for his atrocities. Living in constant dread of assassination, he had not a moment of peace night or day. He scarcely dared to eat lest his food should be poisoned. He was in dread of the very guards who stood by his door at night, and his sleep was disturbed by terror and hideous dreams. Whenever he rode out he was in a constant tremor, expecting to see a lurking assassin leap out from every corner. The miseries he inflicted upon others thus rebounded upon himself. It is a curious fact well worthy of note, that this infamous pagan tyrant, in a court surrounded by the most foul and unblushing dissoluteness, should himself have entered a complaint to the Senate, charging the *theatre* with exerting a demoralizing influence upon the community. Speaking of the play actors, he says:

> "In many instances they sediciously violate the public peace. Many promote immorality in private families. The Oscan farce, formerly only the contemptible delight of the vulgar, has risen to such a pitch of depravity, and has exercised such an influence upon society that it must be checked by authority of the Senate."

The obsequious Senate banished the play-actors from Italy, and that they might still more ingratiate themselves with the merciless tyrant, proposed that a temple should be reared to Tiberius, and that he should be worshipped with divine honors. The answer of Tiberius shows how a man with the heart of a fiend can use the language of an angel:

> "For myself," said the wretch, "justice will be rendered to my memory, if I am regarded as worthy of my ancestors, watchful of your interests, unmoved in perils, and fearless of private enmities in defence of the public weal. These are the temples I would raise in your breasts. These are the fairest effigies, and such as will endure."

It was nine years after Tiberius commenced his reign before he retired from his luxurious palaces in Rome to his more voluptuous surroundings on the island of Caprae. Tacitus, speaking of the motives which induced Tiberius to seek this comparative retirement, says:

> "He probably wished to indulge his cruel and libidinous disposition with greater effect in the secrecy of a retired situation. Some thought that in his old age he was ashamed of his personal appearance, for he was exceedingly emaciated, lank and stooping; his head bald, his face ulcerous and thickly patched with plasters."

For six years Tiberius remained at Caprae. During this time there were many revolts and conspiracies, which he crushed with a bloody hand. An accident occurred in the village of Fidenae, a few miles from Rome, one of the most appalling recorded in history. A wealthy Roman, Atillius, as a pecuniary speculation, reared an immense amphitheatre for gladiatorial exhibitions. He built it on a weak foundation, without sufficient braces for an edifice so vast and to contain such multitudes. Crowds of all ages and both sexes flocked from Rome to witness these games. The theatre was filled to overflowing, and a countless throng were gathered on the outside, engaged in sundry sports beneath the lofty walls. Suddenly there was an awful crash and the walls fell. Some portions, bulging out, overwhelmed the multitude swarming around the walls, while other portions tumbled inward. Thousands were instantly killed, while other thousands, crushed and mangled, were buried beneath the ruins. Their cries and groans, for many days and nights, filled the air as they were laboriously dragged out from the mass of timber and stone. According to Tacitus the carnage resulting from this accident was greater than the carnage at Waterloo. Fifty thousand were crushed by this terrible disaster.

There was at this time, at Rome, a very profligate young man of winning address, by the name of Caligula. He was the son of that distinguished Roman general Germanicus, of whom we have before spoken as having been put to death by Tiberius. By adulation and sycophancy, he so ingratiated himself in the favor of the tyrant, who had no children, that he adopted him as his son and heir. The young profligate was an apt pupil of his imperial master in all the vices of the age. Tiberius himself said of him, "he has all the vices of Sylla, with none of his virtues." At length the long dreaded hour of death came to Tiberius. To the miserable monarch he came truly in the form of the king of terrors. The king was, at this time, at Misenum, near Naples. As he was reclining upon his couch, while death was rapidly stealing over him, his physician, feeling his pulse, whispered to some one standing by, "His life is ebbing fast; he can not long continue." The king overheard the remark, and was so frightened that he fell into a fainting fit, which led all to suppose that he was dead.

The courtiers immediately abandoned the remains of the king, and crowding around Caligula, congratulated him upon his succession to the crown. In the midst of their exultation, to the consternation of all, it was announced that Tiberius had revived. The wretched old man was utterly helpless. A few of the courtiers entered his chamber, and pressed a pillow upon the face of the struggling monarch, until suffocated, he lay still in death. Thus died the third of the Cæsars, in the seventy-eighth year of his age, and the twenty-second of his reign.

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THOUGHTS AS THEY OCCUR.—No. 120.

BY ONE WHO KEEPS HIS EYES AND EARS OPEN.

MR. BONNER—I take it that the LEDGER is in some sort a family school, and that through it matters of taste, of propriety, and of manners, are criticised, adjudged and taught. I beg to call attention to my woes, and to utter a wail. Being a lover of fine engravings, I have at great pains made a collection sufficient for my purpose. Benevolence forbids me to keep them all to myself. When friends come in I am bound to open my treasury to their inspection and admiration. But my experience has driven me almost to the necessity of locking up my portfolios and hiding them away.

As engravings are usually handled, a fine impression of an engraving is well nigh ruined after passing through a dozen hands. We never saw a person who, by nature, knew how to handle an engraving! Persons entirely well bred, familiar with books, accustomed to the fineries of a modern parlor, connoisseurs in jewelry, china and fabrics, prove themselves to be utterly ignorant of engravings.

In the first place they soil them. If any part pleases them they lay their finger on it. The perspiration and oily particles of the hand are transferred to the engraving. In a little time the brilliance of the impression is dulled.

Then two or three ladies will fall into conversation over an impression that cost from one to two hundred dollars, and forgetting everything else but their own sweet selves, they lean on the engraving, rub it with their sleeves, and even crumple it, and send my forehead into wrinkles and my heart into displeasure, so that both engraving and owner are much damaged.

These are faults only of some. The ignorance of lifting and handling an engraving may be pronounced universal. A large print will be taken up with one hand, as if it were a board instead of paper; and a break or crease is made wherever the hand takes hold. Even when the hands are applied, it is in such a way as seldom fails to leave some wrinkle or fold.

Then, in returning engravings to the portfolio, they are often laid in face to face, so that the ink of one blurs the face of the other.

All these and many other art awkwardnesses arise from ignorance and inconsideration. People are not instructed as they are about dresses, hair, ribbons and such like. There ought to be in our art academies a department for teaching *how to handle engravings*.

As it is, I dread to open my portfolios. I stand by in watchful misery expecting momentary disaster. I am fairly sick after the visit of a party. The poor things are heaped up on each other, sometimes folded double, often face to face; they have been so broken in the paper, or finger spotted, that one would almost believe the engravings themselves had fallen into dissipations and were recovering from a debauch!

Now and then, I find one of those highly organized people, who have native tact and art-instinct; who, without instruction, by a species of sympathy, take, hold, and return engravings with delicacy and address. I do look upon such persons with fond admiration! Were I a young man, looking for a life companion, I should inquire, Can she handle engravings? is she a good housekeeper? is she good? will she have me?

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A PEEP AT WASHINGTON.

NUMBER TWO.

After walking through the Patent Office at Washington, one has several reflections. First: A feeling of thankfulness that our innocent ancestors died without knowing how uncomfortable they were—minus these modern improvements. Secondly: How many heads must have ached, hatching out the ideas there practically perfected. Thirdly: Did the *real* inventors themselves reap any reward therefrom, pecuniary or otherwise, or, having died "making an effort," did some charlatan, with more money than brains, filch their discovery, and, attaching his name to it, secure both fame and gold?

Leaving these vexed questions unsettled, the place is of rare interest even to the ordinary curiosity-hunter, destitute either of philosophical or mechanical proclivities. Looking at General Washington's relics, one cannot but be struck with the simple tastes of that time. The plates, knives and chairs, which formed part of his household furniture, would—apart from their associations—be sniffed at in any fashionable mansion of the present day. And as to his camp-chest and writing-desk, every mother's 1862-pet, whose budding moustache is half demolished by parting kisses, is provided with a better as he goes to "the war." And Washington's coat, waistcoat and breeches are of a fabric so coarse, that our present officials would decline wearing the like except under compulsion. The same may be said of the coat worn by the immortal General Jackson; at the mention of whose name I will forever remove my bonnet, for his unswerving loyalty toward, and manly defence of, his zealously slandered wife. Alas for some of the pluck and spirit that animated the some time wearers of those faded old military clothes. But it is too aggravating a theme; though I *did* linger over those military buttons, with divers little thoughts which I should like to have whispered into the President's ear, and which, if properly carried out, would no doubt save this nation!

As to the fifteen flashy silk robes presented by the Japanese government to ours, I had no desire to get into them. A strange soldier standing near while I was gazing, stepped up, and with camp frankness said to me: "Now I suppose, being a lady, you can form some idea of the value of those things." "Oh, yes," said I, "they are like the bonnets of to-day, expensive in proportion to their ugliness." Penetrated by the wisdom of my reply, he answered feelingly, "*Just so*,"—and touching his cap, passed on. Among General Washington's relics I saw a cane presented to him by Franklin, and a chandelier presented to Washington by some French magnate, so awkward, inferior and crude, compared with the splendid affairs of the present day, that one compassionately wishes, for the donor's sake, that his name were withheld. I saw also, under glass, the original treaties of several foreign nations, French and others, with our government. The autographic signatures of great potentates, yellow with time, was suggestive. The models of steam-engines, revolvers, torpedoes, mowing-machines and excavators, were "too many for me;" I might have looked wise over them, to be sure, like other folks, but had I stood staring till the millennium I couldn't have comprehended them, so where was the use of shamming? I just said, that's not in my line, and went to inspecting the different varieties of hoop-skirts; and though the masculine mind may not recognize the fact, the perfection to which those things have arrived by gradual stages is comforting to contemplate. I say "comforting" advisedly; because if one *must* drag round so many yards of dry goods, a cage is better adapted to hang them on than the human hips. It is my opinion that notwithstanding the torrent of abuse to which the hoop is and has been subjected, it will never be *dropped*—save at bed-time.

FANNY FERN.

A CHORAL OF DEATH.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE

I hear the trumpets of the wind all night
Sounding in all their ancient might,
But naught of ancient joy is in their tone—
Sorrow herself alone
Shades every note and clouds the watchful stars.

I hear the organ of the sea all night,
Sounding in all its ancient might,
But heavily bows each strain with wo,
Till in its endless flow
Is felt alone a long, long sign of Death.

I see the huge volcano lift his torch all night,
With more than all its ancient might;
There is a fiercer, more exulting glare
Upon the frightened air,
And lava-billows chant a demon hymn.

Why move the mighty minstrels thus all night,
With grief's wild storm or troubled might?
Go to Ball's Bluff, to Antietam go,
And, ah, too well thou'lt know
The direful cause of all this horrent time,
Nature is shuddering o'er the sundering clime,
And with the winds and waves
Groans madly over fratricidal graves!

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THE LIFE-CURSE.

BY ELIZA A. DUPUY,

AUTHOR OF "THE OUTLAW'S BRIDE," "THE WHITE TERROR," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXIX.—CONTINUED.

A wild scene of tumult was passing in the Convention, which met at the Hotel de Ville. Tallien, Barrère and their friends were preparing for their final attack upon Robespierre, in which they charged him with the intention of making himself Dictator. De Vere mingled among the crowd that filled the ante-chamber, and after waiting a weary hour he saw the person for whose appearance he had been watching come from the interior hall. He raised his hand to attract his attention, made a sign which was rapidly returned, and the two issued from the door at the same moment and moved toward a retired street without apparently having any interest in eacy other.

When they were free from observation, the Frenchman crossed to the side on which De Vere slowly sauntered, and asked in an indifferent tone:

"In what can I serve you, citizen?"

"Read this, and see."

He did not venture to give him the note he had received, lest some one might be watching them. He dropped it on the pavement, and passed leisurely on. The man secured it, glanced rapidly over its contents, and quickly rejoined him.

"I was about to communicate this news to you myself, but some one has forestalled me. Citizeness Fitzhugh is in St. Lazare, and I have obtained a permit for you to visit her."

"Ha! how long have you known this?"

"Only three hours; but in that time I have earned the hundred pounds you promised me. I had some trouble to get the order from Collot, for he has much on his hands just now, but I succeeded at last."

"Thanks, my friend, and now let us use it as speedily as possible. Assist me to get safely away from this city with my family and this unhappy lady, and I will make the hundred pounds a thousand."

"Ah, citizen, I will use my best efforts to serve so liberal a person as you are. The executions still go on; innocent blood flows like water, but a better day is coming. If we can save citizeness Fitzhugh but forty-eight hours, a change will have taken piace, and we shall all be saved, or be crushed in one general ruin."

"Forty-eight hours? Will the crisis come so soon?"

"I have said it; the battle has already commenced: it rages now in words; to-morrow it must end in blood."

"And what will be the issue?"

"Who can tell? The leaders on either side battle for their heads, for to fail is death by the knife. We may lose all: if so, both you and I are lost, for suspicion has already been directed against you, and you have been denounced as a foreign spy."

De Vere paused a moment; his strong heart grew cold within him as he abruptly asked:

"Whence comes this accusation? You know it to be false."

"Yes—and so does a greater than I, which is more to the purpose; but that will not avail you if Robespierre remains in power. Who made the denunciation I know not. I saw your name on the list of the suspected, and, citizen, to be suspected in this wretched country, is to die."

"Ah, you speak the truth; I must remove from my present lodgings and seek a better place of concealment."

"It will be useless, for you are under strict surveillance and every movement you make is watched. Doubtless our steps are followed at this moment."

"Then how can you with safety give me the order you say you have in your possession?"

"I hold it in the hollow of my hand; when we part we will shake hands, and you can secure it. Call a fiacre at the first stand, and try to elude your pursuer."

"Thanks, Morlaix; I will never forget your efforts to serve me."

"Ah, citizen, Madame Fitzhugh has been a good friend to me and mine in other days, and I do not forget such obligations. She has been guilty of no crime, although her name is on the condemned list. Adieu, sir, I must return to the Convention, for a terrible strife rages there, in which both your life and my own is bound up."

Morlaix offered his hand, and the transfer was dextrously made; he then hurried away, occasionally looking back to see if he was followed. He saw nothing suspicious, and passed out of the narrow street into a broader thoroughfare swarming with rough-looking men, mingled with soldiers armed to the teeth.

De Vere, watchful and cautious, slipped the paper he had received into his coat sleeve, and sauntered slowly forward as if he had no particular object in view, till he came to a carriage stand. Selecting one with a fresh-looking horse, he showed a piece of money to the driver, and said:

"Take me to St. Lazare as rapidly as possible, and I will pay you double fare."

The driver whipped up his horse and set off in a quick trot; they soon left the locality from which they had started far behind them, but he had not evaded the blood-hound who had been set upon his track. The same man who had been the bearer of the note to De Vere, thrust his head from behind a pillar that sheltered him, and with a cruel laugh, said:

"Safely hooked! Now I'll see after the *lady*. Lady, forsooth! we exterminate such useless lumber here, and let only *women* live: women who can fight for freedom, and drink the blood of the aristocrats. Ha! I only wish they all had one throat, and I could thrust my knife in that."

With this ferocious thought he turned toward the lodgings of De Vere to carry to Helen the order for her arrest and separation from her child, for such was the infamy he was commissioned to perpetrate.

In the meantime, De Vere was whirled away toward the prison into which he was so anxious to penetrate. The cab stopped beneath its gloomy walls; in front of the door stood the death-carts receiving their daily role of victims; among them were men, women, boys of tender years, and the anxious eyes of the visitor scanned each load with the fear that he might find among them the person he came to seek. He drew a deep breath as he became assured that Mrs. Fitzhugh was not in that fated crowd, and with a sickened and oppressed heart passed beneath the portals of the prison.

The keeper examined the order he presented, then gave the bearer a broad stare, and called an assistant, to whom he whispered a few words; he then said aloud:

"Conduct the citizen to the cell of citizeness Fitzhugh. He has a permit to see her."

The man signed to De Vere to follow him, and after leading him through several gloomy corridors, he opened the door of a small damp chamber furnished with a straw mattress and a deal table, on which was placed a pitcher of water and a plate containing some fragments of bread.

A gaunt and wasted form arose from the mattress as De Vere entered, and with a cry of surprise exclaimed:

"Oh, Reginald, I thought myself deserted by all; but you are here; you have come to save me."

"I trust so, dear madam. I have been long trying to discover your place of confinement; but until to-day I had little hope of succeeding."

"How long have you been in Paris?"

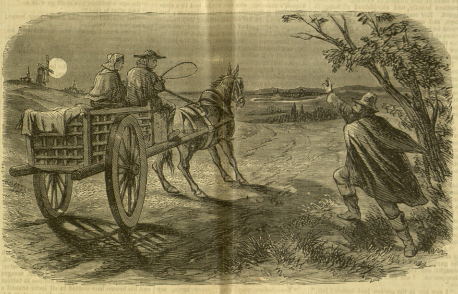
"Six weeks."

"And Helen?—Ida? Where have you left them?"

"They are with me."

"With you! Good Heavens! you surely have not ventured to bring them into this den of vampyres? I would sooner have perished alone than have exposed those I love to such danger."

"Have good courage, madam, for I trust we shall all escape. I have friends, and times are changing in this miserable country. The reign of blood must soon end, and we shall be permitted to return to England in safety."



THE ABBE AND SISTER THERESE INTERCEPTED ON THEIR WAY TO PARIS.

"And the boy? No news yet of him?"

A deep gloom overspread the face of De Vere, as he said:

"I have given him up, for I have sought everywhere without success. And now tell me how you came to linger in Paris till you were arrested. Why did you not fly to England at the first alarm?"

"I should have done so; but my cousin, to whom I was tenderly attached, was ill of an incurable disease. She required constant care, and the ruin of her family deprived her of the means to procure a nurse. I had shared her prosperity, and in adversity I could not desert her. I remained with her till her death; then it was too late to escape; for she lingered on through all the horrors of the times till the execution of her eldest son gave her her final deathblow. In a few hours after her decease the whole family was arrested: her youngest son and a daughter have already perished, and I know not why I did not share their fate."

Mrs. Fitzhugh uttered these details with the air of a person who has suffered so much as to become stupefied, and De Vere gazed with the deepest compassion upon her whitened hair and pallid face. He made an effort to speak cheerfully:

"Have patience, dear madam, yet a little while, and I trust you will be free once more."

"But to-morrow the death-carts will demand their victims; my name may be called, and then it will be too late," she replied, in a hollow tone.

"I have reason to believe that you will be passed over. Keep up your courage, for I trust that I can yet save you."

"You have risked so much to do so, that you deserve success," said Mrs. Fitzhugh with a melancholy smile.

"The poor remnant of my life is not worth much; but I shrink from the thought of dying by violence."

The next half hour was passed in giving personal details that were of interest to those who had been so long separated, and with some surprise De Vere heard the grating of the key in the lock. He looked at his watch and said:

"I was granted an hour, but they seem to have abridged the time. I had much to say—many arrangements to make; but now I can only assure you that everything that lies in my power shall be done to ensure your escape."

He arose, turned toward the door, which slowly opened and revealed a spectacle which seemed to turn him into stone. Helen, insensible, with her long hair streaming over her person, was borne into the cell in the arms of a turnkey, who placed her upon the mattress before De Vere recovered voice enough to ask:

"What does this mean? and where is my daughter?"

"It means that you and this woman are on your way to Paradise by the road paved with saw-dust," brutally replied the same man who had delivered the note to him a few hours before. "As to the little one, she is but a baby, and she was spared."

"But what have you done with her? Bring my child hither, that she, at least, may receive our last blessings, if, as you assert, we have been ensnared to our own destruction."

"Well, my Prince, have you any more orders to give?" asked the man mockingly, "for you speak as if the world belongs to you. Your little girl is in very good hands, and will be well taken care of; that is enough to tell you, so I will leave you to console madame. Citizeness Fitzhugh, here is an order for your release, and you will come with me."

Mrs. Fitzhugh was bending over Helen trying to restore her to consciousness, and she scarcely heeded his words. When he repeated them in a peremptory tone, she hurriedly said:

"Let me stay here; I do not ask to go and leave those who have lost themselves to save me."

"But you have no choice; come at once, or it will be worse for you and those you leave behind you."

De Vere aroused himself from the paralysis that seemed to have fallen upon him, and taking her hand said:

"Go with him, dear madam. Find my daughter, and keep her with you till she can be restored to her native land. If we perish, on you must devolve the task of protecting Ida."

"And leave my poor Helen thus?"

"There is no alternative, madam. Heavy as this blow is, we must seek consolation where alone it may be found."

The man again warned her that it was time to leave, and kissing the cold cheeks and lips of Helen, she wrung the hand of De Vere and was hurried away.

Helen recovered from one nervous spasm only to fall into another, and the only words that escaped her lips were faint cries for her daughter. At twilight a man came in carrying a stone jug filled with water, from which he replenished the pitcher, and then placed a small loaf of bread upon the plate.

Again the harsh lock grated, and the unhappy prisoners were left alone; alone in their desolation and bereavement. De Vere endeavored to comprehend how he had fallen into this snare; but he found it impossible to understand why he should have been substituted for the person he had come to save.

There was now but one hope left him—that the government might fall in time to save himself and his wife from the fate that menaced them; but what in the meantime would become of their daughter? that *timid and sensitive child, left in the midst of such terrors as would assail* her in a strange place, separated from all she loved.

That terrible night was passed in darkness; he sat with the trembling form of his wife pressed to his breast, endeavoring to sustain her courage by whispering hopes he did not himself feel. At intervals he moistened her parched lips with water, but neither of them touched the bread. Food would have choked them in those hours of bitter anguish, and the sad wail of each heart was not for the death that hung suspended over them, but for the fate of that beloved and lost daughter whom they might never more behold.

Confused murmurs from without reached their ears, and they knew that all Paris was astir on that night, on the events of which hung so many lives; the dull echo of thousands of trampling feet—the wild cries of horror, or of exultation, came faintly through their prison walls; but they could draw no augury from them of what was happening, nor console themselves with the hope of ultimate escape from the snare into which they had evidently fallen.

CHAPTER XXX.

ALINA'S PLANS OF REVENGE RIPENING.

A chateau a few leagues from Paris was occupied by a foreigner and his wife, who had some mysterious connexion with those in power, for they passed to and from the city without question; a paper with a few lines upon it, traced by the hand of Robespierre himself, being their passport at the barriers, and Citizen Maretsky found no difficulty in entering or leaving Paris at all hours.

Alina, still beautiful, though an expression of chagrin and lassitude veiled her features, sat in a poorly furnished room awaiting the return of her husband. Her own toilette also betrayed the change in her circumstances which her surroundings indicated, for her dress was of cheap material and carelessly worn.

On her arrival in Russia, Alina's visions of a grand future had met with a signal downfall, and she found that she had been made the victim of a daring deception on the part of Maretsky. He was not the Baron, but the younger brother of that dignitary, and his anxiety to gain possession of the diamond necklace was partly to gratify a penchant of his eccentric brother for collecting the finest diamonds in the world; partly to gain the large sum which Alina secured by her complicity in that affair.

The money and jewels which had been given in exchange for his costly prize were advanced by the Baron, who had so great a desire to snatch these jewels from the Queen of France that he was willing to give even their full value to gain possession of them. As the reward of his brother's dexterity, he bestowed on him a valuable estate, at the same time expressing the hope that it would not be dissipated at the gaming table, as his other patrimony had been. The caution proved unavailing, for in five years from the consummation of the fraud, Maretsky was not only ruined himself, but he had mortgaged his wife's annuity and disposed of nearly all her available property.

The baron refused him any further assistance, and he returned to France with Alina, in the hope that she could realize something from the fragment left from her uncle's estate. La Rosière had passed into other hands, and Maretsky hired the chateau in which they now lived. He became a violent Republican, and found employment under the government as a spy.

Madame L'Estrange, in deep disgust at the deception practised by the *soi disant* baron, secured her own portion of the spoil, and retired to Vienna, where she lived in such state as drew around her a circle of friends and admirers. To her care Alina committed her son, who was placed at college in the city, and the faithful Betty left the service of her mistress to be near the darling of her heart.

The bitter disappointment and resentment of Alina at the deception practised against her, no words may depict; but Maretsky soon made her feel that she was in his power, and he threatened her with the heaviest penalties if she attempted to repudiate her allegiance to him. He loved her for her beauty and grace, and he valued the subtle tact of which she was mistress too much to be willing to give her up.

At times Alina bore the chain willingly, at others it goaded her almost to desperation; but this man had an iron hand, with which he did not hesitate to crush the first symptoms of rebellion, and in time she became his obedient slave.

Two days before the arrest of De Vere, she sat and watched impatiently for the return of Maretsky from Paris, *for she was anxiously expecting news from her son, from whom she had* not heard for many weeks. She at length heard the clatter of his horse's hoofs, and hastened to join him in the supper room. Maretsky seemed elated, but he did not communicate his news till the repast was over and the servant had retired.

"There are no letters," said Alina, "or you would have given them to me."

"No—but there is something better. Something that promises money—money, which we need above all things."

"What is it, then? for I am as much in need of money as you can be."

"Ah, well, I have a capital chance to make a good haul now."

"Explain, if you please; I do not understand enigmas."

He abruptly asked:

"Do you know anything of your aunt, Mrs. Fitzhugh?"

Alina shrugged her shoulders indifferently:

"I neither know nor care. She was only my uncle's wife, and we have long ceased to have any intercourse with each other."

"You will not be shocked, then, when I tell you that she has been arrested? that she has been in prison for the last two months?"

"What can she have done? and why did she not leave France before this danger reached her?"

"She has done nothing herself, but she was involved in the ruin of a family that was implicated in the faction of Camille Desmoulins. They have all perished by the guillotine, but Mrs. Fitzhugh is still in prison, and there is really nothing against her, I believe."

"Then you may be able to save her, perhaps. But how are we to gain anything by that? *She* has very little with which to repay the service."

"That is true; but that rich Englishman, who married your cousin, has actually come to Paris to find and, if possible, to rescue her from the fate that threatens her."

"Sir Reginald De Vere in Paris! and where, then, is Helen?"

"With him, of course; as is also their child. I learned this to-day from a creature of my own, and now, if we play our cards well, we can make him pay roundly for his imprudence."

Alina's eyes sparkled, and a cruel smile gleamed on her red lips, revealing the points of her even and white teeth. She rapidly said:

"They have thrown themselves into the toils, and now let them escape if they can. This is, indeed, glorious news, for it shall give the De Vere estate to my son."

"How can that be managed, pray? I do not understand."

"Yet nothing is more simple. You have access to Robespierre; ask for the release of my aunt, and as its price promise to place at his mercy an Englishman and his wife who came hither as spies. Once in prison, and their doom is certain: the girl I will take charge of; she is the heiress; I will send her to Madame L'Estrange to be educated; she will have opportunities of seeing my son, and they shall learn to love each other. When they are old enough they shall be married, and thus the succession to his father's estate will be secured to Lionel."

She spoke rapidly and decisively, and Maretsky listened with admiration.

"Ah, you are a treasure, I declare—a perfect treasure. Yes—you have developed a masterly policy; I will adopt it; I will save the life of your aunt by the sacrifice of these people. But we must lose no time, for clouds are gathering about Robespierre; the people are becoming weary of his ideal republic, which, it seems, is to be cemented and sustained by blood alone."

"Ah, if he should fall, what are we to do?"

"Do? Why, in the first place we will wring a few thousand pounds out of this Englishman for keeping off his trial a few days. Then, when he is finally dealt with, you can go over to England, claim the guardianship of the daughter as nearest of kin, and have a snug home at De Vere Castle, with a handsome allowance for taking charge of the heiress. Madame L'Estrange and Lionel can join you there, and your plans be more securely carried out than in Vienna. To *you*, with your abilities, all this will be easy of accomplishment."

Alina smiled, and held out her hand:

"Agreed. Rid me of Sir Reginald and my detested cousin, and I see my way clear before me. *We* do not condemn them to death, but the country whose laws they have violated. I cannot see my aunt perish without making an effort to save her, and that cannot be done without the immolation of these victims. Denounce them, and obtain her release as your reward."

"It is my purpose to do so to-morrow. De Vere has a friend who is attached to Collot D'Hertois. This Morlaix was once a porter in the establishment of Mrs. Fitzhugh's relatives, and it is chiefly through his efforts that she has not before been tried and condemned. When she was removed from La Force, he lost sight of her, and he has been using every effort to discover which prison she was removed to, urged on by a large bribe offered him by De Vere in case of success."

"How have you learned all this?"

"Oh, I have my agents, as Robespierre has his. I am in the secrets of the police, for I hold a confidential position among the accredited spies of the government. I have gained much useful information for those in power from abroad, as well as in France, and my full value is appreciated."

Thus was this nefarious plan arranged. Maretsky and his astute companion spent the greater portion of the night in arranging all its details, and providing against every contingency. Ida was to be brought at once to the chateau, and detained there till a safe opportunity offered to send her to Vienna, or to cross over to England, as they might deem most prudent.

Maretsky really possessed the power of which he had boasted, for he succeeded in obtaining the order for the release of Mrs. Fitzhugh, and the arrest of De Vere and his wife. He obtained information of the order for Sir Reginald's admission to the prison of St. Lazare, and caused a private notice to be sent to the keeper, commanding him to retain the bearer of it as a prisoner.

Maretsky then went in person to superintend the proceedings at De Vere's lodgings. Helen, almost in a paroxysm of frenzy, was torn from her daughter, and borne away in a state of insensibility, while the child was placed in a close carriage, which set out at once for the chateau.

A note was left for Mrs. Fitzhugh, which simply apprised her that a friend had obtained her freedom, and warned her that she had best remain in strict retirement until an opportunity to escape from the country, which should be provided, offered itself. The writer assured her that he should keep himself informed of her whereabouts, and communicate with her at the proper time.

The agent of Maretsky conveyed Mrs. Fitzhugh to a lodging in an obscure street, and left her there, too bewildered and ill to take any measures to assist those who had taken her place in the cell at St. Lazare.

Ida's cries and supplications were disregarded. Maretsky tried entreaties, then threats to silence them after they set out on their journey; *finding these unavailing, he had recourse to other means. He forced her to drink wine in which* he had mixed a powerful narcotic, and this soon stupefied her to such a degree that she was taken from the carriage in a helpless condition, and on being removed to bed, she soon fell into a deep sleep, which lasted many hours.

The grounds around the chateau were very extensive, and near a gate which opened toward a small village in its vicinity, was a pavilion containing two rooms, which had once served as a gardener's house. This was occupied by a solitary woman, who had lived in it a year before the chateau was taken by Maretsky. The recluse always wore a black serge robe, and a large bonnet, which concealed her features. She communicated with no one, and was known only as the benefactress of the poor people around. It was believed that she was under a vow of silence, for she seldom spoke unless compelled to do so, and Sister Therèse, as the country people called her, was supposed to be one of the nuns whom the events of the Revolution had deprived of an asylum.

On the second morning after Ida's abduction, she was sitting under the shadow of a tree reading, when she was surprised to hear voices speaking in English on the other side of a thick hedge, which concealed her from observation. A child was sobbing and entreating to be restored to her parents, to which her companion replied:

"Be good and obedient, Ida, and my husband will endeavor to rescue your father and mother. They have been imprudent, and are in prison, but they may soon be liberated, and then I will take you to them."

"Oh, let me go to them now. I can stay in prison too; I cannot—I cannot live away from them."

"But it is my will that you shall remain here. I am your cousin; the cousin of your mother, and it would be criminal in me to thrust you also into danger."

"Then they are in danger! oh, my heart will break."

The child wept violently, and the lady drew her away; the involuntary listener could hear no more, but her sympathies were deeply enlisted, and she resolved to find out the cause of the child's distress; to alleviate it as far as lay in her power, for she lived only to do good to others.

Late in the evening, the little girl, pallid and forlorn, wandered in the garden alone. She spoke French very imperfectly, and Alina had no suspicion that the sombre recluse of the pavilion had any knowledge of English. She was weary of the child's wretchedness, and glad to be released from her presence for a season; so she lay down to take her siesta, and Ida went out to indulge her grief alone.

As she threw herself upon the turf, wringing her hands and crying aloud in the impotence of her childish sorrow, a soft voice spoke to her in her own beloved tongue.

"What is it, my child? Sit up and tell me what has happened to distress you thus?"

The little girl looked up, reassured by the kind face that bent over her, and wiping away her tears, said:

"They have torn me from my parents, who are in prison—and—and I know, in spite of what cousin Alina says, that those cruel people will kill them."

Alina! the name struck upon the heart of Sister Therèse as a blow from a poignard, and she hurriedly asked:

"Who, then, is your father?"

"Sir Reginald De Vere."

"And your mother? Was she Helen Fitzhugh?"

"Yes, ma'am; for my grandma is named Fitzhugh?"

The questioner placed her hand upon her heart to still its tumultuous throbbing, for she held the clue to the wickedness that had been perpetrated. By dint of persevering inquires, Dora Calvert had possessed herself of the history of Rudolph from the time of his disappearance from Baltimore, till he left Havre. The actual fate of Sir Lionel De Vere she could not learn, but she divined it; and she comprehended the nature of Alina well enough to know that in seeking to gain possession of this child, she had some ulterior purpose to serve. She had also traced Alina's career step by step till her departure for Russia, and she was aware that it was the most ardent desire of her heart to have her son succeed to the inheritance of his father. She rapidly ran over all this in her mind, and then asked:

"Have you any brothers or sisters, my child?"

"No, ma'am; my brother is gone. My parents have only me."

"And you are the heiress; I comprehend all now, and I will baffle this wickedness, or perish in the attempt. Listen to me, and follow my directions implicitly, and I promise to restore you to your parents, if it is possible to do so."

"Oh, madam, I will do anything—anything for that."

Dora reflected a moment.

"Let no one know that I have spoken with you. No one about here is aware that I speak English, and your cousin, above all, must not suspect it. Return to the chateau; seem a little reconciled to the separation from your parents, and to-morrow evening meet me here. I will bring you news of those you love."

"Dear lady, how shall I thank you?"

"By being prudent and watchful. In that lies your only chance of rescue. I am satisfied that your parents have fallen into a snare carefully prepared for them. In what prison is your father confined?"

"In St. Lazare."

"That is enough. I will seek the city and find him. To-day the tyrant falls, and blood will cease to flow. Wipe away your tears; be tranquil, for I shall return with good news, I feel assured. Trust to me, and I will find means to deliver you."

Ida eagerly thanked her, and promised all she required; but Dora abruptly left her, for she saw the flutter of a white robe in the distance, and she hastened to gain her retreat before she was discovered.

CHAPTER XXXI.

A GAME FOR LIFE OR DEATH.

Dora had many friends among the proscribed clergy, and one of these she sought in the present emergency. The Abbé Dumont lived in the neighboring village, stealthily performing the duties of his profession; and to him she confided the story she had just heard, together with her own conjectures as to the motives of Maretsky and his wife for what they had done.

The abbé listened with deep interest, and readily promised such assistance as he could render. He was in the habit of entering Paris as a market man, there to gather the news of the day without suspicion. His housekeeper often accompanied him, and her place in the cart was readily surrendered to Sister Therése. By the first gleam of daylight they passed the barriers, and heard the rejoicings of the people, who sat around bonfires and sang the Marseillaise.

Robespierre, lately their idol, had fallen; on that very day he was to be tried and condemned, and they were rejoicing over his doom. A new era had dawned on France, and henceforth the guillotine was to cease its diabolical activity.

If De Vere had only escaped the proscription of the last forty-eight hours, all might be well. The abbé left his vegetables in the care of his companion, and sought a friend from whom he *hoped to be able to gain such information as would be useful to him. That friend, by a lucky* chance, was Morlaix, and no sooner had he named Sir Reginald De Vere, than he said:

"Ah, I had hard work to save him till the tiger was dealt with; but he is safe. He and his wife are liberated from prison, but they are wild at the disappearance of their daughter. She has been spirited away, and they can find no trace of her."

"Where can I find Sir Reginald De Vere?"

"At his old lodgings—rue de ——, number fifteen."

"Thank you; I will seek him, as I have some news for him that he will be glad to hear."

"What—about the child?"

"I believe so."

"Then go in Heaven's name, and console the heart of that distracted mother."

"I will do so, and you will do well to get passports from Collot D'Herbois for this gentleman, with his wife, child and servant. He will need them by to-morrow morning, and he will doubtless pay you a heavy sum for the service."

"You are a wise man, Father, and I always do what you bid me; but I must also include Madame Fitzhugh in the party, for she must return with them to England. I have discovered where she is hidden, and I am on my way to her now."

"As you please; only get the passports, and provide the means of reaching Calais without delay."

They separated to their different destinations. The abbé readily found the lodgings of De Vere, and brought to the wretched parents the first news they had learned of their lost child. He faithfully related all Dora had told him, and informed De Vere that as the reward of the service she purposed to render him, she desired to be included in the party, as companion or maid, as she was anxious to escape from France. She pledged herself to return to Paris on the following morning, bringing the little girl with her.

Sir Reginald wished to return with him, but to this the abbé would not consent, as their plans were already arranged, and his presence might cause them to miscarry. In a tumult of doubt and anxiety, he prepared to seek Morlaix, and make his preparations for immediate departure when once his daughter was restored to him. On this day passports were freely granted, for the Terror had ceased to reign, and men once more breathed freely.

Dora returned in safety to her pavilion; there seemed to be a commotion in the chateau which alarmed her, but on inquiring of a servant if anything had happened, she replied that Citizeness Maretsky was uneasy about her husband, as he had gone to Paris on the previous day, and had not yet returned. There had been an *émeute*, and she feared that some disaster had befallen him.

Dora watched anxiously for the appearance of Ida. Late in the evening the little girl came into the garden, approached the pavilion, and looked anxiously around. The new friend called to her, and she hastened toward her, and tremulously asked:

"Oh, madam, have you heard anything of my dear father and mother?"

"Your parents are safe, my child. They are released from prison, and I have promised to restore you to them."

Dora threw herself in her arms, unable to utter her grateful thanks. She at length said:

"When can I go to them? My cousin at last sleeps. She has been in a fearful state all day, and I thought I should never get away from her. But she will not sleep long, for she is too uneasy about her husband's strange absence. She is preparing to leave this place to-morrow morning, and to take me with her. She told me so to-day."

"Then we have no time to lose, and you must come with me now."

The child frankly placed her hand in that of her new friend:

"Take me to my parents. I have no fear of you, but I do fear the lady yonder, who says she is my cousin; but I never heard of her before."

Dora led Ida quickly toward the pavilion, and wrapped her in a black mantle, the hood of which served in place of a bonnet; then locking the door, she opened a private gate, which unclosed on the open country, and they commenced their flight toward the village, in which the Abbé Dumont lived.

The path led through a woodland, which they traversed in safety; but the way was long, and the child of late unused to walking. She soon breathed heavily, and complained of being fatigued. Her companion sustained her wavering steps, and assured her that in an hour they would be beneath the shelter of a friendly roof, where she could rest before setting out for Paris. The thought of soon seeing her parents infused new life into the weary little creature, and again she went on with swift steps.

Twilight had fallen, and the stars came out in the clear, blue sky. Suddenly the clatter of a horse's hoofs, coming from the direction of the chateau, was heard; and in alarm, Dora looked around for some place of concealment for her little companion. They were now in the open road, and no friendly thicket was near to shelter her from observation.

In the shadow of a high fence she discovered a cart, which had broken down and been thrust on one side, till the owner could return and remove it. Behind this she placed the slender form of Ida, and rapidly explained to her that she would walk slowly forward till the person who was approaching them had passed by; then she would return for her.

The trembling yet docile child comprehended that this was her only chance to escape observation, and she crouched down with her dark wrapping folded around her, in as small a space as possible.

Dora took out her rosary and moved leisurely down the road. The rider saw her dark form, recognized the benevolent recluse, for she was known to every one in the vicinity, and sharply pulled up his horse.

"Ah, Citizeness Therèse, 'tis you. Have you, by chance, seen a little girl straggling beyond the garden of the chateau? Citizen Maretsky brought one there two days ago, and she has disappeared. I am sent to find some trace of her."

"I saw her in the garden just before I left," replied Dora. "If you have seen nothing of her on the road you have just traversed, she must have taken another direction; or perhaps she is still in the garden. It is large, and has many hiding-places in it."

"It has already been thoroughly searched. No—she has run off, and Citizeness Maretsky is in a frightful passion about it. Since you have seen nothing of her, she cannot be on this road, so I may as well take some other direction."

As he turned his horse's head, his eye fell upon the broken cart, and, to Dora's intense alarm, he rode toward it and made a brief pause; but the frightened child sat perfectly motionless behind the wheel that sheltered her, and, after a moment of breathless suspense, the man put spurs to his horse and galloped back the way he had come.

Dora waited till the last sound had died away, and then drew out the trembling fugitive, who was nearly insensible from fright.

"The danger is past, my love; we shall now be able to reach the village without further pursuit."

"*Ah, I felt as if I must die if he dragged me* out; but he is gone. Let us run, madam, for he may come back again."

"No—you would soon become exhausted; we will walk quietly forward, and keep our strength for an emergency, if one should arise."

No further alarm reached them, and, as the village clock was striking nine, they reached the humble cottage of the Abbé Dumont, which stood in a vegetable garden which he cultivated himself. His market cart, already loaded, was in front of the door, and the stout mule that drew it was grazing in a small paddock at one end of the house. The priest, a slender, worn-looking man, received them with great kindness, and congratulated Dora on her successful evasion.

"The danger is not yet over," she replied, "for the alarm at the chateau will extend here. This child must rest before we can remove her; but where can we find a place of safety for her?"

"Ah, we are provided against surprises; I will put her where I have often been concealed myself from the myrmidons of the Terror."

Ida, overcome with fatigue, had placed her head upon the table, and was already asleep. The Abbé approached the large fire place, touched a concealed spring, and the back opened, revealing a narrow recess in which a man might sit reclining against the wall. In reply to his summons, an old woman came in bringing an armfull of bedclothes, and in a few moments a pallet was spread within the cavity, and Ida was placed upon it. Dora aroused her, and explained that if she heard a noise in the room she must remain perfectly quiet, or she would not only compromise her own safety, but that of the friends who were aiding her to escape. With a sweet, sad smile, she replied:

"No one shall suffer through my cowardice. I will remember all you have said, and remain as still as if dead."

The housekeeper placed bread, and butter, and milk before them, and after partaking of this frugal fare Ida lay down upon her hard couch, and saw the panel close with some palpitation of the heart; but she had perfect trust in her new friends, and she soon slept peacefully. Dora went to the cottage of one of the neighbors who was ill, and remained with her several hours ministering to her as she was in the habit of doing to the sick poor in the vicinity.

Just as she had laid aside her fears, and was preparing to return to the Priest's house, the noise of a party of horsemen entering the village was heard. They stopped at every door, and inquired if a child of ten years of age, wearing a white robe, had been seen in the village, and offered a large reward for her recovery. No one had seen such a fugitive, and after uttering a few oaths they went on and dismounted at the Abbé Dumont's cottage.

The lights had been extinguished, and they knocked loud and long for admittance before it was gained. At length the priest appeared, and mildly asked:

"What would you have, friends? Why do you alarm my house thus, at this late hour of the night?"

"Because it suits us to do so," was the insolent reply of one of the intruders. "We were sent hither to find a child that has been stolen from the chateau. If you know anything of her, you had better make a clean breast of it, or it will be the worse for you."

"Friend, the Terror has ceased to reign; God is no longer repudiated in the land, and his ministers are again entitled to the respect they once claimed from all men. I resume my clerical character, and demand from you the obedience due to the Curé. Leave my domicile, and cease to insult me by your brutal accusations."

"Ha! but he takes a high tone," sneered one. "But that is not answering our question."

"Nor shall I condescend to answer it. Search my house and see if you can find the person you seek."

The priest struck a light, and placed a lamp upon the table. The men looked upon the bare walls, the uncovered floor, and the fire-place filled with pieces of half charred wood, which looked as if they had been undisturbed for months.

"There is nothing suspicious here—but there are other rooms."

"Yes—one that is occupied by my housekeeper, and a small one that serves me as my cell," replied the abbé, coldly.

The men took the lamp and entered the old woman's chamber, who sat up in bed in a state of violent indignation at this intrusion; but they did not heed her exclamations; they looked through every part of the room, and satisfied themselves that no one was concealed within it. They then went to the other end of the building, and looked into the small closet which the priest had well called a cell. It had nothing in it but a mattress, a small table, and a cross, with a reading lamp placed near it. When they returned to the outer room, the abbé asked:

"Why have you searched my house, when you have entered no other one in the village? and who is this child of whom you are in pursuit?"

"We came hither, citizen, because if any craft is to be used, a priest is always the person sought out to practise it. The child is a relation of our employer, and it is important to regain possession of her. If you will aid us, five thousand francs shall be your reward, if we recover her through your assistance."

"The servant of God does not barter his services for the lucre of gain. I have borne with your presence as long as is necessary to accomplish your errand, and you can now relieve me of it as soon as you may see fit. Midnight approaches, and I must go to my devotions."

"*Ta! ta!* now you will have leave to pray in public, so you needn't do so much in the dark. But we will go, for it seems that we must look for our game in another quarter."

After a brief delay the party rode off, and after listening a few moments, the abbé drew near the chimney, sprung back the plate, and asked in a low tone:

"Little one, are you ill with fright?"

"Oh, no, sir; I heard it all, but my courage did not fail me," replied the sweet voice of the child. "Now they are gone, shall we not soon leave?"

"Yes—before very long; sleep again, my child, and when the time comes, I will arouse you for the journey."

But Ida could not sleep. She sat up, and watched with feverish anxiety for the signal to leave her hiding-place. Dora soon returned, heard all that had passed, and spoke a few words of encouragement to the patient little captive. She then lay down on the housekeeper's bed, to snatch a few moments' repose before setting forth to the city.

The cart of the abbé had a box under the seat, contrived by himself, for the safe transportation of articles that had been contraband during the troubled days of the revolution, and in this the little girl was to be placed. In the afternoon, while pretending to put in his load, he had bored a number of air holes in the sides of this box, and its depth was sufficient to afford room to a slender child like Ida, though her limbs would be a little cramped by the confinement.

At two o'clock their arrangements were all completed, and Dora drew the child from her place of concealment, and placed her in the *narrow space assigned her.* A folded coverlet was placed beneath her, and everything that could render her as little uncomfortable as possible was done. Ida was very tremulous, but she quietly submitted to lie down, and have the lid closed over her. A cloak was then thrown over the seat, carefully turned up at the sides to permit the air to circulate through her hiding-place. Dora presently whispered:

"Can you breathe freely, Ida? Is there air enough?"

"Oh, yes, quite enough. I can see the stars through the holes. Only let us get away, and I shall do well enough."

The baskets of vegetables were already placed in the cart, and in the rough blouse and slouched hat of the peasant, the Abbé took his place beside Dora. With a hearty God speed from the housekeeper, they went on their way; the full moon was rising, and every object was as clearly visible as in day-light; as the cart jogged on they frequently spoke to the child, and found that she was awake and patient, in the hope of being soon restored to those she loved. The lid of the box was lifted several times to permit a thorough draft of fresh air to ventilate her hiding-place.

The city loomed in the distance in the first grey tints of approaching day before they encountered any obstruction. Suddenly a man started from the road-side and cried out:

"Halt there! who are you, and where are you going?"

"Can't you see for yourself?" replied the Abbé, brusquely. "We are market people, bound for the city."

"Ho! ho! but maybe you carry something more precious than vegetables."

"You're welcome to look and see for yourself. Here are onions, carrots and cauliflowers. You will find nothing more valuable than these, I trow."

The man raised the cloth that covered the baskets, dropped it again and said:

"Sure enough—there's nothing suspicious there. Hark ye, citizen, have you seen anything of a lost child as you came along? I would reward any one nobly who could give me a clue to one I am in search of."

"A lost child? Is it a girl, or a boy?"

"A girl—a delicate little creature, in a white robe."

"No, citizen, I have overtaken no such child as you describe. Pardon me, but day is breaking, and I shall be late in getting to market."

The man stepped aside, and the vehicle rolled on; Dora quelled the rapid beating of her heart, and when it was safe to do so, spoke in a low voice to the poor child. She immediately replied:

"I heard all—oh, hurry on, or I shall die in this narrow place."

By this time a turn in the road had hidden them from their interrogator. The Abbé whipped up his mule, and trotted rapidly toward the city. They passed the barriers at last, and entered a badly lighted street. A fiacre was drawn up near the sidewalk, in which sat a muffled figure. A sign from the priest caused him to spring from his seat, and in another moment Ida, half paralyzed by her long confinement, was lifted out, Dora sprang into the vehicle and received the child in her arms.

Morlaix, after exchanging a few words with the Abbé, drove off at a furious pace, and in half an hour they reached the lodgings of De Vere. He was on the watch for their arrival, and with a stifled cry of gratitude he grasped his recovered treasure, and holding Dora by the hand, mounted rapidly to his rooms.

Helen, wild with joy, clasped her child and covered her with kisses; she then threw her arms around the stranger who had saved her, and uttered her thanks and blessings with hysterical rapidity.

"You have saved her—you have restored her to me, and henceforth you shall be to me as a sister. I claim you as the friend of my life."

"Thanks, Lady De Vere," she gently replied—"I need friends, and such as yourself and your husband any one may be proud to claim."

She spoke in English, and the purity of her accent caused De Vere to say:

"You are then a countrywoman of ours?"

"Almost—I am an American, though for the last six years I have been a wanderer in Europe. Much of that time has been spent in France, and I am weary of the turmoil here. I need repose, and I wish to accompany you to England."

He smiled brightly as he replied:

"On one condition you shall go with us."

"And what is that?"

"That you will make our house your home; our purse your own."

"To the first, I answer yes—to the last, no, for I have resources of my own which suffice for my simple wants. I feel the need of a home, and I accept yours as frankly as it is offered."

Ida threw herself in her arms, and kissed her, and Dora felt repaid for all she had done. Mrs. Fitzhugh, who was with them, looked on this scene and wept, for her bitter sufferings had brought her almost to a state of second childhood.

An early breakfast had been ordered, as the travelling carriage was to be at the door at nine o'clock, as Morlaix had followed the advice of the Abbé and prepared everything for their departure. The interim was filled up with explanations, and Helen said:

"Alina—always Alina; she has indeed fulfilled her threat. But for you, dear friend, this last blow would have broken my heart. Tell me by what name I shall call my benefactress?"

"Those who love me, call me Sister Therése. I am not a nun, though my days are devoted to deeds of mercy," replied Dora, with a pensive smile.

"And this day you have performed one that entitles you to enternal happiness."

Breakfast was dispatched; at the appointed hour the carriage came to the door, and scarcely believing in their good fortune, the party of travellers found themselves beyond the barriers of the city in which they had suffered so much.

While uttering their congratulations to each other, a trace broke, the horses were stopped, and the driver got down to remedy the disaster. While they were thus detained, a child, meagre and wan with famine, with his clothes in tatters and his brown hair matted in elf locks around a broad, clear brow, came to the door, and in faltering accents, said:

"Give me a few sous for the sake of the good God, for I am starving."

"Poor infant!" exclaimed Helen, with starting tears. "See, he seems ready to perish of want; and, oh, Reginald, he seems just the age our boy would have been. Where are your father and mother, little one?"

"I never had any," was the reply. "I lived in a large house with other children, but the soldiers drove us all away, and now I have no one to give me food."

"Good Heavens! Is not this too dreadful! A baby left to his own resources! Dear Reginald, our child has been given back to us, and we should do something to show our gratitude. Let us take this little waif, and provide for him."

"But it may lead to some difficulty about the passports," objected De Vere. "We had better leave him at the first cottage, with a sum of money sufficient to induce the people to receive him."

The child looked from one speaker to the other. Helen caught the gleam of his clear, blue eyes, and she suddenly said:

"My heart tells me to claim this child in the place of the one I have lost. Let me have my way in this, my dear husband; brave a little inconvenience to gratify me; for, oh! in spite of his rags and squalor, he reminds me of what our boy might have been at his age."

To this appeal De Vere could not reply by a refusal. The lad was placed on the box beside the coachman, and at their first stopping place, a bath, clean clothing, and wholesome food, restored to the little fellow all his natural vivacity. Dora superintended his toilet, and she discovered upon his shoulder a cypher, stamped by pricking the flesh deeply and rubbing in gunpowder. The letters were S. F. E., followed by a date, which they supposed to be that of his birth, as it corresponded with his apparent age.

Sir Reginald surmounted the difficulty at the passport office by simply stating the truth concerning the boy, and requesting permission to remove him to England, where he pledged himself to provide for him. Homeless and destitute children were then too numerous in France to cause any objection to be raised, and the little waif was taken to the castle, where he soon acquired the language he heard spoken around him.

The lad stated his name to be Jacques, but Lady De Vere, who felt herself hourly drawn more nearly toward him, insisted that he should be called Henry, that having been her father's name, and the second one bestowed in baptism upon her lost son.

With restored health, the boy proved to be both handsome and intelligent, and the passionate attachment he evinced for his protectress rendered him dearer to her with every passing day. As time passed on, Sir Reginald also came to regard him almost as a son, and as the child of his adoption, he resolved to educate and provide for him in the future.

Thus years lapsed away; the children grew in beauty, and showed the tenderest attachment for each other. Nothing was heard from Alina, and Helen almost ceased to fear her machinations against her happiness.

In France great changes had taken place. That wonderful man, Napoleon, had brought order out of the chaos of the revolution; he had assumed the government as first Consul, and was making rapid strides toward imperial power.

Sister Therèse had visited France several times in pursuit of a friend she had lost, but as yet she had been unsuccessful in finding him. Her home was at Vere Castle, where she was beloved and cherished as the dearest of friends.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

◆

TALLEYRAND'S CUNNING.

A lady, who professed to be charmed with Talleyrand's wit, begged of him to write his name in her album. His gallantry could not refuse, and he began to write a verse.

"Arretez, Monseigneur!" exclaimed the lady; "it may be very well for inferior persons to write verses, but the name of Talleyrand is enough to appear in my book. It is fame."

He fixed his keen eye on the supplicating fair one, and wrote his name at the very top of the page. The anecdote spread; and all Paris laughed at the happy evasion of perhaps seeing his name in a few days signed to a bill of 10,000 francs!

◆

KINDNESS.—Life is made up, not of great sacrifices or duties, but of little things, in which smiles and kindness, and small obligations, given habitually, are what win and preserve the heart, and secure comfort.

OH, LAY ME TO SLEEP.

BY FINLEY JOHNSON.

Oh, lay me to sleep where the roses bloom,
Where the air is filled with a rich perfume;
Where the dews of heaven gently fall
Like glistening lights in a crowded hall;
Where the whispering zephyrs float along,
In unison with the wild bird's song;
Where upon the waves of the running streams
Dances with joy the pure moonbeams.

Oh, lay me to sleep where the fairies dwell,
Where flowers abound in nook and dell;
Where the wood-nymphs dance with tiny feet,
Where the sunset clouds and the twilight meet;
Where the night winds whisper soft and low,
Keeping tune with the streamlet's flow;
Oh, lay me to sleep, that I there may dream
Visions to waking eyes unseen.

◆

WARP AND WEFT;

OR,

THE COTTON FAMINE.

A TALE OF MANCHESTER LIFE.

BY J. F. SMITH,

AUTHOR OF "THE SOLDIER OF FORTUNE," "DICK TARLETON," "THE STEP MOTHER," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXIII.

> Beauty, thou art a fair but fading flower,
> The tender prey of every coming hour;
> In youth, thou, comet-like, art gazed upon,
> But art portentous to thyself alone.
> Unpunished, thou to few wert ever given;
> Nor art a blessing, but a mark from heaven.
>
> SEDLEY.

Michael Haman had no sooner quitted the house than Bessie, who had watched his departure from the adjoining room, returned. She found John Bentley measuring the floor with impatient strides. His knitted brow betrayed the intensely absorbing occupation of the busy brain. Like a man who finds himself suddenly entangled in a labyrinth, he was seeking a clue to escape from the tangled maze. A dozen schemes suggested themselves, but were dismissed as impracticable, one after the other. Like many exceedingly clever but unprincipled persons, he had calculated all the chances except the one which had so unexpectedly turned against him—the visit of the money scrivener; prescience only could have foreseen that. The old man would see his brother—perhaps, his niece—describe the appearance of Bessie at his lodgings—her tears—her despair. How to account for her presence? The question was a puzzling one.

"You have ruined me," he said, stopping suddenly in the middle of the room. "Blighted the hope of my life—the expectations of years."

The poor girl wrung her hands in silent grief.

"Broken the marriage by which I sought to establish my fortune."

"Money is not always happiness," observed Bessie, timidly.

"Poverty is misery," replied John Bentley. "I have learnt that lesson. It was an evil hour for both in which we met. It has driven me from England."

"Oh, take me with you!" exclaimed the unhappy creature. "Save me from the shame, the misery of exposure—the sneers of my companions, the reproaches of my mother, the despair of Willie, when he shall hear his sister has disgraced him. I dare not witness that—lost, wicked as I am, I dare not witness that."

"Impossible," replied John Bentley, coolly.

"I am punished—rightly punished," sobbed Bessie, "for my pride and vanity; and yet it was not all pride. I loved you before I knew the danger there was in loving one so far above me—loved you without hope, yet strove to render myself less unworthy by cultivating the mind you have so often praised. A word, a look, a smile from you gave me fresh courage for my task. It was a fatal error. Would I had remained the ignorant thing you first knew me!"

"It is not that," replied the hypocrite, but slightly moved by her appeal. "The question is how to neutralize the mischief your presence here has caused."

"I can die," said Bessie, mournfully.

"That would not obviate it," observed John Bentley, coldly. "Had you consented to marry Walter Glyde, the danger would have been averted."

His victim shuddered.

Walter Glyde was the name of one of Mr. Haman's clerks, a good-looking, dissipated young fellow, who, struck by the beauty of Bessie, had made her repeated offers of marriage. No doubt the poor fellow was strongly attached to her, and her rejection of him had not rendered his conduct more steady.

"I question whether even now it would be too late," added the hypocrite, speaking very deliberately.

"Impossible!"

"Not to save me?"

"Not to save myself," replied Bessie Hannan, firmly. "I know, John Bentley, that I cannot be your wife—you were truthful in that respect, and repeatedly told me so; but fallen as I am, I will never deceive an honest heart that loves me; never give you the right to despise me."

"Romance," muttered her betrayer; "idle romance!"

"I call it principle," said Bessie.

John Bentley mentally cursed the weakness that had yielded to a momentary passion, and wondered at it, perhaps, even more than he blamed it. It had destroyed the cunning calculation of years of hypocrisy. Something, he thought, might—*must* be done to turn aside the blow.

"I am so bewildered, upset," he said, "that I can scarcely contemplate my position; much less decide upon the conduct to pursue. Meet me this evening," he added, "at the usual place and hour."

"For a last farewell?" faltered Bessie.

"Perhaps not," was the reply; "but I require time and solitude to reflect."

"At eight, then," the poor girl replied, eagerly, her heart yielding to a hope so vague, that she scarcely dared breathe it to herself.

"At eight," repeated he.

Bessie Hannan caught his hand, and raised it to her lips. There was little of passion in the act, it resembled rather the weak submission of an Eastern slave, crouching to the will of some imperious master.

"She loves me," thought John Bentley, as the sister of his friend quitted the room. "Loves me with all the devotion of her womanly nature."

This reflection, and the satisfaction it afforded him, did not arise from any feeling of gratified vanity, for vanity was the weakness his heart felt most free from; but from profound calculation. He was considering how he might turn the affection of Bessie to his safety. One way appeared, and that was her marriage with Walter Glyde. Could he bring her to consent to that, he might defy the malice of Michael Haman, and his attempts to expose him. Full of this idea, for it had scarcely assumed the form of a project yet, the schemer directed his way to the counting-house, which for the last six months had been placed entirely under his direction. He had the private books in his charge, the foreign correspondence; in fact, everything except the signature of the firm—that his employer still reserved to himself.

Men are rarely tempted to an evil action but that the means of accomplishing it do not present themselves. Is this fatality? or is it chance? We have frequently asked ourselves the question. In looking over the accounts an inaccuracy suddenly struck him, and he rang for one of the clerks.

"Burton's invoices," he said.

"Directly, sir."

In a few minutes several papers were placed upon his desk.

Collating them with the day book, his suspicions were confirmed, and he summoned the clerk a second time.

"Bring the order-book. Stay; who entered the payments on the 25th?"

"I think it was Mr. Glyde, sir."

A slight smile curled the hitherto firmly-closed lips of John Bentley.

"Send him to me," he said.

A tall and gentlemanly-looking young man made his appearance. There was nothing sinister in his countenance, the expression being rather frank and reckless than otherwise, although dissipation had ploughed hard lines on his once regular features.

Whilst pretending to be engaged over the invoices, John Bentley continued to eye him narrowly; and read with intense satisfaction the trouble in his eyes, the scarcely suppressed agony and shame that quivered upon his lips.

"Shut the door," he said.

Walter Glyde obeyed him submissively as a child.

"And draw the bolt."

The bolt was drawn.

"What is the amount of your defalcation?"

"Sir!"

"Do you not understand me, Mr. Glyde? I generally speak in plain English. I asked you the amount of your defalcation? how much you have robbed the firm of? Will you be pleased to answer me, or must I call in an accountant to go over the books? for I cannot suppose that Burton's invoice is the only one you have falsified."

The guilty clerk hid his face in his hands.

"I give you just three minutes to answer me," added the speaker, in the same dry, measured tone.

John Bentley drew out his watch, and placed it upon the desk before him.

"Ruined! detected!" muttered the young man.

"You have one minute more."

"Disgraced!"

"Dishonesty is certain to be detected, and disgrace, in one form or other, inevitably follows it," observed the clever schemer, whose actions, if not legally, were, judging them by the standard of morality and honor, quite as dishonest as those of the culprit who stood trembling and overwhelmed with shame before him.

"The three minutes have elapsed," he added.

"Two hundred pounds," gasped Walter Glyde at last.

"Is that the entire amount?"

"The entire amount, sir."

"You will find candor the best policy with me," continued John Bentley. "Consider well. There must be no after recollections. No 'I had forgotten this,' 'I omitted to mention that;' or any of those miserable shifts by which weakness seeks to extenuate crime. Your statement must be full and clear. I therefore ask you again, Do two hundred pounds include every shilling you have obtained?"

"Yes," answered the guilty man.

"And taken during what period of time?"

"The last six months, sir."

"Look over these invoices, and mark the amount abstracted upon each. Take your time. Your hand, I presume, did not tremble when you falsified them. The writing appears firm enough."

Walter Glyde hesitated.

"Do you prefer my sending for an officer?"

There was something in John Bentley's tone, as well as his manner of proceeding, that seemed to hold out hope; and the wretched culprit at once obeyed. His chances of escape were already so slender, that he felt his position could not be made much worse by the confession.

"There, sir," he said, passing the invoices to him, "my life is in your hands. If you can, for pity's sake, show mercy. I have been already punished for my crime by nights of sleepless agony, burning remorse and shame. My first fault led to the second. I could not exist without the means of drowning my feelings. If you only knew how I have been haunted."

"I can imagine it."

"Day and night," continued the culprit, "my terrors never for one instant left me. My name pronounced in the counting-house—the step of a friend upon the stairs of my lodging, a hand laid familiarly upon my shoulder in the street—but for the drink I should have gone mad. The intoxicating draught alone sustained me—gave me fictitious courage, followed by sickness, horrible depression. Save me!" he repeated. "I will live upon a crust, bread and water, till I have replaced the money I have robbed my employer of."

The damp dew of mental agony stood upon the brow of the speaker as he made this impassioned appeal to the generosity of the man whose heart was closed against all such weakness. If John Bentley consented to spare him, it would not be from pity, but self-interest.

"I have not the power, even if I had the will, to prevent the discovery of your defalcations," observed the latter, coldly. "The invoices have passed through the books."

The wretched man let fall his head despairingly upon the desk.

"Burton, Massey and Long would prove the payments of their accounts by cheques."

Walter Glyde groaned audibly.

"You have credited them by cash."

"Ruined! lost!"

"All the most devoted friend, were he in my place, could do," continued the hypocrite, "would be *to give you time to escape*."

"I am penniless."

"A friend, if you had one, might supply you with the means."

"I have no friends. I have lost them all," said the detected clerk, in the bitter accents of self-reproach.

"On one condition," continued the man who had so unexpectedly become the arbiter of his destiny, "I will prove that friend."

"You, sir!"

"I. Supply you with the means of reaching America. Two hundred pounds would enable you not only to arrive there, but support yourself till you obtained employment. I perceive," he added, referring to a newspaper, which was lying on the desk before him, "that the Falcon sails for New York in three days."

"Do I rightly understand you?" demanded Walter Glyde. "You are a cold, reserved man, but you would not trifle with the misery of a wretch in my position?"

"I rarely trifle with any one," was the reply.

"And you will do this? cast out a plank to save a drowning fellow-creature? God bless you, sir! My future life shall, if possible, atone the past; it shall, indeed. Your own heart, which I have misjudged, must recompense you. I never can."

"You forget the condition," observed John Bentley.

"You are the master to impose it."

The hypocrite felt that he was so, and once more the path before him appeared straight and clear.

"The day before you sail you must marry Bessie Hannan," he added, lowering his voice almost to a whisper.

Secretly as the intrigue between John Bentley and his victim had been carried on, their intimacy had not entirely escaped the jealous notice of the clerk, who, to do him justice, loved her as only woman should be loved—in sincerity and truth; the rest is but passion, evil in its birth, and still more evil in its final work. He perceived at once—for he was no fool—the nature of John Bentley's offer, and tears of bitter, hopeless rage started to his eyes, that he dared not hurl it back in his teeth with the scorn and contempt it merited.

"I perceive, sir, my honor is the price of your benevolence."

"Your what?"

"My honor."

"Pooh, man! You forget it is no longer of any marketable value. The hangman claims it, for you have committed *forgery*, as well as breach of trust. Honor! I had no idea crime could be so facetious. Would you rather have your name written in the parish register as the husband of Bessie Hannan—the girl you once pretended to love—or inscribed in the 'Newgate Calendar?'"

"My life is in your hands," said Walter Glyde, gloomily. "Dispose of me as you please."

"You consent, then?"

"Yes."

"Remember, there must be no retracting," observed John Bentley, sternly. "I am not the man to be trifled with with impunity."

"Enough, sir. *I know you now;* for a long time I misunderstood your character."

It is not agreeable, either to an author or his readers, to enter minutely into details over which it is best for human nature to draw a veil. Circumstances played into the hand of the false friend and betrayer. Walter Glyde, in whose heart all feelings of honor and manhood were not yet extinct, found himself reduced by his vices to become the miserable tool of a man who, in heart and principle, was not a whit more honest than himself.

As for Bessie, his hold over her was in the weakness of her own heart. It is generally through the affections that women fall; reason seldom deceives them—their feelings but too often.

"Tha'rt bin a cryin' ag'in, gal," said the widow Hannan, when her daughter returned home. "There be sumut wrong, and it can't be shame. Thee'd never go and disgrace theeself, for thee brother Willie's sake?"

"No, mother; no!" faltered Bessie.

"It would break his heart, and mine, too!"

"Believe me, there is nothing wrong."

"There be, though!" exclaimed Sam, who overheard the last words of the speaker as he entered the kitchen. "Why else should thee lie half the nite a sobbin' and moanin', like a sick powt? I heeard 'ee, and only wish I could get to rights on it. It beant Joe Wilshire, any way," he added. "Poor lad! thee a half broken his heart; and more fool he to pine for 'ee."

"All comes o' book larnin'," observed the widow. "I never seed any use in it for gals makin' up to their betters. But it won't do."

"Why thee doesn't call Joe Wilshire her betters, mother, does 'ee?" said Sam.

"I beant alloodin' to him," replied Mrs. Hannan.

"To who, then?"

"To that fine spark, Walter Glyde," answered the widow. "I ha' watched un nite arter nite rodin' down the lane, and creepin' along the hedge. He follows her like her shadder."

Bessie looked surprised, not at hearing of the poor clerk's attachment to her—that she was already well acquainted with, but at his perseverance in watching her.

"I'll break the neck on him if I cotch him," ejaculated Sam.

"And sarve him right, too, lad," said his mother. "Dear! dear! it would be a sad thing for sorrow and shame to come upon us, and Willie away!"

"It shan't come if I can help it," muttered her son, doggedly; "and gin it do come I'll know how to deal wi' it. But I'll see Mr. Bentley first, and have a few words wi' him. He be a true friend."

"So he be, lad; so he be."

"And Willie told me, if aught happened, I wor to talk wi' him. It wor only the nite afore he left us for furren parts. 'Sam,' he said, 'thee mun take care o' the sister, mind that.' And I do mind it, and——"

"Why is this?" interrupted Bessie, throwing her arms round the neck of the speaker. "How have I deserved your unjust doubts and suspicions?"

"Be they unjust?"

"They are, indeed."

"What wor thee a freetin' for, then!" demanded her brother.

"May not the heart be sorrowful without sin or shame?" replied his sister, evasively.

"Well, gal, I can't gainsay that; can thee, mother?" demanded Sam. "I have had queer feelin's mysе'f at times; not about love, mind; leastways, not allays about. I wish thee wor wedded, gal," he added, looking Bessie affectionately in the face. "I do, indeed; it 'ud be somethink off my mind."

"Perhaps I shall be some day," answered his sister, with a faint attempt at a smile.

"Tha'rt too partickler," said her mother. "Thee might a bin a wife two year ago, to my sartin knowledge; but the wor too proud, and wanted to make theeself loike Willie."

The widow spoke as if it were an offence for any one of her other children to aspire to imitate or equal her darling son.

"Se mun have her own way," observed Sam; "and may be it's for the best, for after all I don't think Bessie would hang her own brother."

"Hang thee!" ejaculated Mrs. Hannan. "Lord be good to us, what put that thought into thee head, lad?"

"This talk about Bessie, mother."

"About me!"

"Aye, lass; for if any one wronged or brought thee to shame, I should be hanged for killin' him, as sure as my name is Sam Hannan."

A pang shot to the heart of his sister as she listened to these terrible words, which the speaker uttered as if it were quite a matter of course that he should take the life of the man who disgraced her.

The above conversation left her in a fit state of mind to listen to the arguments and entreaties of her betrayer. We use the word "entreaties" advisedly; for John Bentley, who scarcely found it necessary to sue to win her heart, had to descend to supplications in order to pervert it.

A proof Bessie Hannan was not naturally vicious.

"You will consent?" he urged. "Remember that the purpose—the aim of my whole life—depends upon your acceding to my request."

Still she remained silent.

"What do you object to?" he continued. "It is but the change of name. As I told you, Walter Glyde departs in three days for America."

"Yes, I understand that."

"You will be only in name his wife."

"And can you not guess why I hesitate?"

"No."

"Because it will separate us for ever," replied the poor girl, bursting into tears. "You could not do me justice, even if you would."

"I have already told you," observed John Bentley, "that it is impossible I should ever be your husband. We are too poor to marry."

"I am the sister of your friend."

"Deeply as I respect William, I cannot sacrifice myself—will not. Besides, although my heart is yours, my hand, as you are aware, is already engaged to another."

"Deceit! Deceit and sin!"

"The world calls it prudence, Bessie. It is not my fault if poverty has made me its slave. I have done my best to retrieve the error into which our mutual passion hurried us. A marriage with Walter Glyde will save you from shame, the reproaches of your family, the sneers of the world. It is not my fault if you have to endure them."

"And but for one feeling I would endure them," answered Bessie Hannan, firmly. "Can you not guess it?"

John Bentley alluded to their affection, using the word "mutual" to spare her weakness.

"No," was the reply; "for from the instant my hand is another's I shall despise you. If I consent to marry Walter Glyde, it is to save you."

"To save me?"

"Yes. I would not you should die with your sins unrepented; and Sam would assuredly kill you. Strange, is it not," she added, "that the poor, rough, factory lad should possess a keener sense of honor than the born gentleman—the educated man—the soft hand and still softer speech?"

"You do consent, then?"

"I do," said Bessie Hannan, faintly. "God!" she continued, wildly, "already I begin to loathe myself."

"Thanks, dearest girl; the rest is——"

"Stay," interrupted his victim; "there is a condition. Strange, is it not, that I should make conditions? I will not deceive an honest man. Walter Glyde must know the thing—the sullied outcast being—he makes his wife."

"He knows it all," exclaimed John Bentley, eagerly.

"And still accepts?"

"Most willingly."

"There must have passed a strange confidence between you," observed Bessie, fixing her eyes upon him searchingly.

"It was necessary. How else could we have understood each other?"

"Enough, enough!" gasped the poor deluded girl, who found her illusions respecting the character of the man she had loved fading rapidly one after the other. "I am resigned."

"To-morrow, then?" whispered the schemer.

"When you will. The victim is ready."

They separated. Prudence required that they should return separately from the place of rendezvous, to avoid being seen together; for curious tongues, both in and out of the factory, already began to talk of John Bentley's increasing kindness and attention to the sister of his absent friend.

Poor Willie. He little knew the being to whom he had confided her.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"Oh! what a goodly outside falsehood hath."
SHAKESPEARE.

We question whether feelings of alarm or indignation predominated most in the breast of Gilbert Haman, as he listened to his brother's highly-colored description of Bessie's presence at the lodgings of John Bentley. *The old money scrivener dwelt artfully upon her tears, her evident despair.*

"The heartless scoundrel!" ejaculated the father of Mary. "Within a week of his marriage, too!"

"His what?"

"His marriage with your niece."

"I see it all," ejaculated Michael Haman, in a tone of triumph. "I understand his disinterestedness now. You are richer than I am; more confiding—more easily to be duped. No wonder that he rejected my offer."

"Offer?" repeated his brother, seriously.

"Why, yes," continued his relative, confusedly. "He and Alice were children together, and what the world calls loved each other. I trembled to lose my child, for we must love something besides gain, and came to—to——"

"To offer him her hand," said the cotton-spinner, seeing how painfully the speaker hesitated.

"Yes."

The word was most reluctantly pronounced.

"With a moderate fortune," added the old man; "something to assist him in business."

"But you rejected him once?"

"I did," replied Michael, with a sigh; "but that was before my daughter was ill."

"He would have taken her without fortune then."

"Ah! you know that, too!"

"As far as his affection for my niece is concerned," said his brother, "Mr. Bentley, in my opinion, acted most honorably. He told me everything—showed me her letter."

"He is very clever," remarked the money-scrivener, bitterly.

"My consent to his marriage with Mary," continued Gilbert Haman, "was not wrung from me, as you may imagine, without some difficulty; but if he has betrayed his best friend, dishonored the sister of Willie, I will recall it. God help me! What have I said? It would destroy my child."

"He has broken the heart of mine," observed the father of Alice, gloomily.

Instead of exciting the indignation of his brother as he expected, it caused Gilbert Haman to reflect upon how frail a thread the life of his own child depended. A sudden shock, a disappointment of the heart, the breaking off of her marriage, and who could answer for the consequences? He rejoiced that they were alone, that Mary was still ignorant of the visit of her uncle to Manchester.

"Excuse me for a few moments," he said, rising to leave the room. "I will soon return."

"Gone to prevent my meeting with my niece," muttered the old man to himself. "The destroyer will triumph over me yet. We cannot guard against every chance. Who would have thought that hearts could be so weak?"

He was right in his conjecture. The cotton-spinner had left him to seek Miss Westbury, who joined him in the little study, with a countenance radiant with happiness. She had been superintending the arrangements of Mary's bridal dress—an interesting occupation for most ladies, but doubly so to single ones.

"Now, what do you want with me, Mr. Haman?" she exclaimed; "at such a moment, too! Be quick."

"My brother is in the dining room."

The smile disappeared from the features of the warm-hearted spinster instantly.

"His daughter Alice is dying."

"Poor girl! poor girl!" she ejaculated.

"Mary must not see him."

"Certainly not," said Miss Westbury. "It would only cast a cloud upon her young heart."

"Where is she?"

"In her dressing-room."

"Keep her there," interrupted her brother-in-law, "for another hour, at least. Should they meet, the consequences might prove fatal. John Bentley is a villain."

"I don't believe it," replied the old maid, firmly. "Every action of his life belies it. We are all aware of his former attachment to Alice. He acted most honorably towards he. It was not his fault if her father so insultingly rejected him."

"Michael Haman is a bad man," she continued, after a pause. "You know that he is. Beware how you listen to his slanders."

"I will listen to nothing without proof."

"The most sensible conclusion you can come to," observed Miss Westbury, hastily quitting the study.

"Under present circumstances," said the cotton-spinner, on returning to his brother, "I will not press you to remain with us. It would be painful to all."

"Shall I not see my niece?"

"No; I dare not risk the meeting."

"You intend to give her to John Bentley, then?" exclaimed his brother, bitterly; "to the man who has sent me childless to the grave?"

"It has not been his fault."

"Of course not; mine—all mine."

"I fear so," answered Mr. Haman, soothingly.

"And the girl I saw at his lodgings—the sister, as you said, of his best friend? The hypocrite!"

"That shall be inquired into, thoroughly. If he prove the heartless scoundrel you paint him, rest assured John Bentley shall never be son-in-law of mine."

It was a great relief to the cotton-spinner when his brother quitted the house. So thoroughly was he acquainted with his revengeful disposition, that he gave strict orders to the servants to suppress and bring to him any letter addressed to their young mistress. The precaution proved a useful one; for that same night came one from her uncle.

Had Mary read it, the shock might have proved fatal.

The following morning John Bentley made his appearance at the counting-house an hour later than usual. The clerks observed that he wore white gloves, was very handsomely dressed, and had a smile upon his features.

"Very odd," remarked one of the young men, in a whisper, as he passed into the private room. "White gloves! He is not married yet."

"But will be in five days," said the clerk next to the speaker.

"Lucky fellow," added a third.

"Where is Walter Glyde?" inquired the cashier.

"Mr. Bentley has given him a holiday," was the reply.

"Good morning, my dear sir," said John Bentley, when Mr. Haman, an hour later, joined him in the inner office. "Has anything occurred? Are you ill?"

"My brother has been with me," was the reply.

"I guessed as much," observed the hypocrite, with an air of injured innocence.

"I can't dissemble, Mr. Bentley," said the father of Mary, sinking into a chair.

"Why should you, sir?" demanded the young man, in a tone of well-acted surprise. "It must be painful to every honorable, upright mind."

"My brother saw you yesterday?"

"He did, sir."

"And found Bessie Hannan at your lodgings?"

"Most true."

"Weeping—sorrowing, as women sorrow who have been betrayed, and are about to be abandoned by the man they trusted."

"Did Michael Haman tell *you that?*"

"*He did.*"

"*He told you the truth, sir. He is a close observer.*"

"You confess it?"

"Confess it!" repeated John Bentley, in a tone of well-acted indignation. "Why, he did not dare to insinuate I had ought to do with Bessie's sorrow? No—no! Bad, evil, and revengeful as I know him to be, he did not dare to utter that most infamous lie! And you, too, to suspect me! Is human confidence, then, banished from every heart?"

Gilbert Haman began to breathe more freely.

"We have passed years together, in daily—almost hourly—intercourse. I should have thought that you, at least, have judged me better."

The well-graduated tone warmth in which these words were uttered, amounting almost to reproach, pleased, rather than offended, the father of Mary.

"There is but one man living," continued the speaker, drawing himself up, "to whom I would condescend to vindicate my conduct—expose the weakness of——but no, not even to disabuse your mind, can I descend to that. All is atoned. I have kept my word to Willie, and watched over his sister's happiness, as if she were my own.

"Bessie Hannan is now the wife of her betrayer, of Walter Glyde," he added, correcting himself; "but two hours since I was present at their marriage."

"The next that you are present at, my dear boy, shall be your own marriage," exclaimed his future father-in-law, greatly excited. "Forgive me for my doubts. Remember that a father's heart is anxious. I see it all. You have acted like a true friend to Willie—like a brother to Bessie. From your very virtues they would invent sins, to blacken you in my esteem."

"I guessed when your brother saw the poor girl at my lodgings," said John Bentley, shaking the hand so warmly—we might say affectionately—extended towards him, "that he would draw some evil inference, but not so vile a one as——"

"Say no more about it," interrupted Mr. Haman; "say no more about it, unless you wish to make me feel ashamed of my folly in listening to him."

"Ah! my dear sir."

"Now, go home," said the cotton-spinner.

"Home!"

"Is not my home yours? at least, it very soon will be; "and see Miss Westbury, who certainly has more sense than I ever gave her credit for. Heaven knows how she came by it. Explain to her, as mildly as you can—for she knows my suspicions—how I came to make such a goose of myself. But not a word to Mary. She must not accuse her father of unkindness. So soon to part with her, too."

As our readers may suppose, the arch-demon readily promised that, and took his leave of him.

"So you have given Walter Glyde a holiday?" said Mr. Haman, addressing the cashier, as he passed through the counting-house.

"Mr. Bentley has given him one, sir, for three days!"

"Quite right, same as myself," replied the head of the firm, in high good humor.

"I am sure I don't know what he has done to deserve it," added his confidential servant; "he has been terribly idle of late."

"Very natural. Can't always work."

Several of the junior clerks looked up in astonishment.

"Running after that Bessie Hannan."

"No such person," said the cotton-spinner.

"Sir."

"No such person."

"I mean William Hannan's sister Bessie—Bessie Hannan," repeated the cashier, who began to think that his employer's wits were wool-gathering.

"And I tell you again there is no such person; she is Mrs. Glyde now. You must not be hard upon the young man. Mr. Bentley has given him three holidays, you say?"

"Yes, sir."

"I will make it a week," said Mr. Haman. "You shall have a month when you marry," he added, slapping his old servant familiarly on the back.

"Thank you, sir," replied the cashier, drily.

We doubt not but many of our readers have observed that there is nothing more difficult to conceal than a marriage. Somehow or other, it will ooze out. Every one appears to have a mission to spread the news. The very children seem to take an interest in it. Sam was at work in the factory when he heard it. In a state of great excitement he rushed out without waiting to put on his coat, and met the bride and bridegroom as they were returning from the church. John Bentley had already left them.

Poor Bessie could not speak. She threw her arms around her brother's neck and wept bitterly.

"Look up; what be the matter wi' thee, gal?" exclaimed the soft-hearted giant, blubbering like a child himself. "There be nought to be ashamed on. We mun all come to it one day, I reckon. But thee'st bin mortal sly about it. Gi' us thee hand, Mr. Glyde," he said, extending his own, and grasping that of the bridegroom like a vice. "Lord, I be so happy! Married!"

"What will Willie say?" murmured Bessie.

"Wish thee joy, as I do."

"And mother?"

"Well," said Sam, scratching his head, "mother may be a little contrary loike at first; that be only natteral. Not out o' any disrespect to thee, Mr. Glyde; but a mother, you know, after all, is a mother, and loikes to be consulted and coaxed a bit."

"Shall I break it to her?" asked the bridegroom.

"I think thee'd better not," answered his new brother-in-law, with a comical expression of countenance. "Not but that it 'll be all right by-and-by, lad. Thee don't know mother yet. She has a good heart, but a smartish tongue, loike most woman folk.

"I have it," he added, after a pause. "Let the neighbors tell her."

Bessie shook her head despairingly.

"Mr. Bentley. He be the man."

"No!" exclaimed the newly-married pair, simultaneously.

Sam appeared to reflect for a few instants; a broad grin stole gradually over his honest face, and he slapped his hand upon his apron triumphantly.

"I have it!"

"Who? what?"

"Hang me if I don't tell her meself. Mahap I shall get hard words; mahap a dowse, but I don't mind; aw'm a bit used to 'em, ain't I, Bessie? Yes," he added, drawling out the word, "that'll be best. I'll just take the edge of mother's temper off for thee, lad. Then thee can come in, and it'll be all right enough."

The widow Hannan was thinking of her daughter, for her mind was anything but at rest upon the subject, when her son arrived at the cottage. As it wanted at least a couple of hours to the usual dinner-time, his return somewhat surprised her.

"What arnt (errand) bring thee to home?" she asked.

"*Holiday, mother.*"

"*Be the riders come?*"

"*Hang the riders!* No; a friend 'as got wed."

"And who may he be?"

"I'll tell 'ee presently, mother; replied her son, taking her by the waist, and holding her up in both hands—a way with him when he was pleased, and which the widow only affected to be angry at. "They a gotten spliced on the sly."

"There be worse faults than that, Sam," said his mother.

"I am glad to hear thee say so; don't forget them words."

"What does thee mean, I say?"

"I shant forget 'em."

"Why thee'st never been and made a fool o' theeself?"

"Not yet."

"Sot me down," exclaimed Mrs. Hannan, "sot me down, I say."

"Promise to behave pretty, then, mother."

The widow, by way of reply, cuffed his ears several times, soundly. Sam did not mind it in the least; and when he thought he had taken "the edge off," placed her gently on the ground, and kissed her most affectionately.

"I aint hurted thee, lad?" said the widow.

"Not a bit."

"And now, Sam, what do it all mean?"

"It means that thee must speak a kind word to t' poor lass that has gotten married without asking the consent of her mother."

"That's no slight fault."

"Aye, but there be worse," exclaimed her son; "thee said so theeself. Thee can't deny thee words."

"I don't deny 'em."

"And thee will speak kindly to her?"

"Yes, since I ha' promised thee."

"Come in," shouted Sam, "come in, and down on thee wheybooans (knees). It be all right, mother 'll forgive 'ee."

The next instant Bessie was in the arms of her parent.

"Why didn't 'ee tell me, gal?" said the widow, laughing through her tears, for the marriage of her daughter removed a painful impression from her heart. "I wouldn't a said thee nay."

"Thee may just kiss her," whispered Sam to his brother-in-law, "but do it gently."

Walter Glyde advanced. Mrs. Hannan regarded him for an instant rather doubtfully, but better feelings prevailed, and she offered her cheek to his salute—if not with hearty good-will—without any visible sign of resentment.

"Better," she whispered in his ear, "to act right late than never."

Little did she think to whom that saying ought to have been applied.

"Make Bessie a good husband, and the'll find me a good mother-in-law," she added.

"I do not doubt it," replied Walter Glyde; "and in a day or two will profit by your kindness, by leaving my wife in your care till I have prepared a home for her."

"Home?" repeated the widow; "can't 'ee stay here?"

Her son-in-law regarded his wife before he answered the question.

"Impossible," he replied; "I have to go to Liverpool to receive my money."

"Well," said Mrs. Hannan, "this is a queer wedding-day."

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

* * *

TREATMENT OF CHILDREN.—That which we have often blamed as an indiscreet and dangerous practice in many fathers is, to be very indulgent to their children whilst they are little, and as they come to ripe years to lay great restraint upon them, and live with greater reserve towards them; which usually produces an ill-understanding between father and son, which cannot but be of bad consequence. And we think fathers would generally do better, as the sons grow up, to take them into a nearer familiarity, and live with them with as much freedom of friendship as their age and temper will allow.

MAIL TIME IN CAMP.

BY ETHEL LYNN.

Through the camp shoot the rays of the low-sinking sun,
Who flings, ere he beats a retreat,
Bright, broad golden bars, tent shadows between,
On the line of the company street;
And its guerdon is caught by the "boys" as they glance
From the tent-doors, where waiting they lie,
Or lounge in its light, till the soft bugle-note
Shall be sounded, and echo and die.

There are coarse, soldier jokes, and fragments of song,
There are oaths rude and rough enough, too;
There are sighs buckled down under tight leathern belts,
Sad hearts under overcoats blue.
In poor, dingy hands rest faces unshorn,
Whose eyes mark the sunset grow pale,
As watching they wait for the sergeant's return,
And the bugle-call, "Form for the mail."

* * * * * * * *

The golden light lies on the camp-ground no more,
Tho' the flag up above glitters still,
And waves a salute to the vanishing king,
Whose cloud-banner floats o'er the hill,
And the waiting is over, the missives have come,
White messengers, fearful or sweet,
Are fluttering now in musket-worn hands,
Up and down through the company street.

Ah, see Harry Blain, with a carte-de-visite—
'Tis a baby's fair, round, little face;
And the young father blushes, and hands it about
As a marvel—"My daughter, Miss Grace."
And Vreeland Van Vorst turning shyly aside,
Holds a note (face toward him) till lonely
To-night he may read over, thrice and again,
Those lines ending, "Minnie—yours only."

Poor Neddy the drummer—no letter for him?
The hand from the shrunken sleeve thrusting,
Is little and boyish, albeit 'tis rough,
And the face with its bright hope is flushing.
"No letter for me, sir? Has mother forgot,
Or is she in sickness or sorrow?"
Then over the eyes quick the hand goes across,
"Never mind—I can wait till to-morrow."

"Adolph Langley Dale," ("Dandy Dale," when off drill,)
Holds a hand, large and white, for a letter;
And he twists his moustache in a confident way,
As he murmurs, "This binds on a fetter."
"What! *No!*—has that flirt dared to send me a 'No,'—
I who have won hearts by the dozen;
And see how she says, in a simpering way,
I have loved you, 'tis true—as a cousin.

"I see it all now—'tis that Captain Forshay—
(I wish Captain Forshay were in heaven;)
For shame, Langley Dale—what a booby you are—
Were her chains on your heart so tight riven?
Nay—now for the battle—I'll trifle no more;
Dandy Dale be my soubriquet never;
But first in the fight and last on the field,
I'll eschew the fair false ones forever."

And Allen the bridegroom—hist, boys, and give way,
There was black on the letter he bore,
And white grows his face—she has left him alone,
To mourn for her, sweet Leonore.
They hush the gay laugh, they chasten their joy,
And speak low, as the stricken man moaning,
Goes wandering by to his pitiful home,
Where canvass walls echo his groaning.

Then closer they clasp the white letters from home,
That tell them all's well with their dearest,
And (tho' it is joy) when they chance to look up
Their vision is none of the clearest.
They cannot but think of bright eyes that they love,
That like Leonore's might have slumbered,
A life that like hers might have ended in death,
When the years but a brief score had numbered.

And so talking low as their thoughts wander off,
The twilight comes solemnly creeping,
Till clasping the letters that came by the mail,
The soldiers lie dreaming and sleeping.
And they mutter no oath for awhile after this,
For the words of the pure ones that love them
Lie over their hearts like the wing of a dove
Bearing blessings from heaven above them.

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FOREST ADVENTURES.—No. 4.

BY COL. WALTER B. DUNLAP.

THE ORYX.

The rain continued to fall for eight-and-forty hours, and during that time the people of Thabos did all manner of homage to the rain-doctor. It was plain to be seen that his influence over the minds of the ignorant children of night was not to be easily overcome. The Christian missionary who seeks to lift these natives out from the superstitions in which they dwell, must be meek and patient, persistent and kind, and able to endure much suffering for Christ's sake. The work is not to be done quickly. Preaching and praying cannot accomplish it. They must be first educated into an understanding of Nature, and her laws; and then they may be made to comprehend something of the Creator. I afterwards learned that the rain-doctor had been resting in a cave, not many miles from Thabos, for over a week; so it was very easy for me to understand how he happened to drop down upon the village as he did. These wizards are possessed of much shrewdness and power of perception, and as they spend most of their time in studying the signs of the weather, they are able to calculate the auspicious hour for their incantations with good chance of success.

The third morning after our arrival in Thabos opened bright and pleasant, and our revived oxen were once more yoked up. The old chief gave us all the information we desired; and also furnished us with a fresh supply of corn, in exchange for which I gave him a small brass-mounted pistol. It was very cheap for the corn—amounting to about three cents per bushel,—but he considered himself well paid, and I had no reason to find fault.

On the afternoon of the second day from Thabos we fell in with a herd of springboks, feeding upon the edge of a broad plain. I had no desire to try a chase with these swift creatures, and yet I was very desirous of shooting one of them. Of all the antelope tribe I think the springbok is the swiftest in comparison with its size. As they saw us they bounded away across the plain, leaping high into the air at every stride, as though they were so many machines of steel wire propelled by some unseen power. Ben Gilroy and I hid ourselves behind some bushes, while the rest of the party went forward with the wagons. At the end of an hour the springboks had worked around so near to us that we felt warranted in firing, and the result was, that we brought down two of them.

We found the meat of a very delicate flavor when we came to cook it, though not very tender. The next day, however, under Harry's supervision, we had a "stew" of springbok which was superb. Even old Ben pronounced it excellent.

Ten days from Thabos, over an uneven, tedious road, brought us to another village of the Bechuanas, where we stopped a couple of days. We found these people not so neat as those we had before met, and a pretty strict watch upon our wagons was necessary. Bolus advised us to be careful, and not leave our property unguarded. He said these people were willing to do about as near right as they knew how; but respect for the property of white men was something of which they were ignorant. As at Thabos, we were offered beds by the chief, but we preferred to sleep in our own cots.

Our wagons were drawn up close by the village, and the animals secured so that they could feed. Before retiring I made arrangements for keeping a watch through the night. From ten o'clock until midnight I stood guard myself, with Dan to keep me company. At that hour I called Ben and Bolus, the old guide having proposed that he should take his turn with the rest. Alone I would not have trusted the fellow; but while Ben was up to watch him, I supposed all would be right.

It was a warm, sultry night, and I had arranged my bed close by the after-flap of the wagon, where I could have the benefit of what little air there might be stirring. I had been asleep an hour, perhaps, when I felt a hand upon my arm; and upon turning over, I found my Caffre-boy by my side. He asked me to be silent, and look where he should point. I had learned the character of the faithful lad so well that I placed the most implicit confidence in him; and when he asked me to follow him, I did not stop to ask any questions. As soon as I had slipped from my cot, Dan raised the flap at the rear end of the wagon and pointed to a tree a few yards distant. There was no moon, but the stars were so bright that I could see large objects quite plainly. Upon the ground, beneath the tree, I saw what appeared to be a man—not standing up, like a sentinel; but lying down like a sleeper. I asked Dan who it was. He said he guessed it was old Ben Gilroy.

"But that isn't all," added Dan. "I thought I saw somebody coming up from the village."

As he spoke I saw a dark form glide out from behind some bushes, upon its hands and knees, an creep toward the other wagon, and presently a second form followed.

"They are women," said my boy.

I asked him how he knew.

He said he could see the way in which their hair was done up. They were women, and they had come to steal.

As my eyes became more used to the gloom I could detect the head-dress; and I could also see the outlines of their bosoms. They were women, sure enough, and had come to see if they could find anything worth carrying off. In a few moments they both stopped, and, after exchanging a whispered sentence, one of them crept up to the side of old Ben. There could be no doubt touching the present condition of the fat sentinel, so far as his vigilance was concerned; for he was snoring like a rhinoceros. The creeping thief found his rifle upon the ground by his side, and having slowly lifted it, she carried it away to the bushes, and then returned. Her next movement was to fumble in Ben's breast-pocket; and I might have waited to see what the result would be had I not been a little anxious touching the movements of the second thief, who had glided from my sight toward the second wagon. So, bidding Dan follow me, I leaped to the ground. The thief who was kneeling by the side of old Ben I caught; but the other one was off like a cat. The noise awakened the sleeper, and he started up and reached for his rifle.

"Murder! Fire! Thieves!" he shouted, at the top of his voice.

"Hold on," I said. "Don't make any more noise."

"Eh? Is that you, Colonel?"

"Yes," I replied. "Where is your rifle?"

He started up and looked about him; and, when I thought he had looked enough, I sent him to the bushes, where he found it. Then I told him what we had seen, and what we had done.

"Confound the she-knot-head!" cried old Ben; "let me kick her!"

But I fancied that the sentinel who slept upon his post was more to blame than was the poor Bechuana woman; and after frightening her sufficiently I let her go. She shot away like an arrow; and when she was gone, Ben straightened himself up with much dignity, and demanded to know where that "other knot-head" was.

I asked him what he meant.

"I mean old Bolus," he replied. "The rascal must be asleep."

We found Bolus, however, a little worse off than that; for we found him drunk. He had contrived to steal some brandy from one of the breakers, and had drank himself into a state of utter obliviousness.

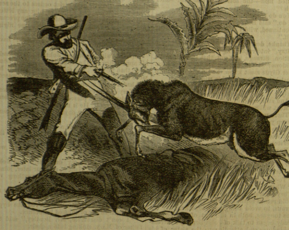
Ben declared that these women must have contrived to convey some powerful narcotic into the fruit which he had eaten during the afternoon in the village; but I knew the old fellow's proclivities too well to accept such an apology. However, as no damage had been done, we turned the affair off as a joke, and Harry Rusk and Abner Jackson finished out the night.

In the morning we were early astir, and the next night was passed upon the bank of a small river which watered as pretty a piece of country as I ever saw.

At about two o'clock, on the following afternoon, we saw a herd of gemsbok, (the *oryx gazella.*) Of the antelope tribe this is the noblest of form and feature. The eland is larger, but more clumsy and gross. There were about a dozen in the herd, and when we first discovered them, they stood upon the slope of a gentle hill, just below us. The sun was shining full upon them, and their sleek glossy hides, with the streaks of jetty black relieving the bluish gray of the back and sides, and giving a more dazzling whiteness to the belly, gleamed as though anointed with oil.

In an instant we were fired with enthusiasm, and preparations were made for the chase; for I determined that one of the magnificent creatures should be mine, if I could secure him. I knew that the chase must be a hard one; for of all the animals of the forest, the oryx is one of the most difficult to run down. We expected to see the whole herd start off in one direction; but such was not the case. Most of them dashed down the hill; but two of their number—a bull and a cow—took a course to our right, along the side of the slope. I turned to Harry and pointed with my whip to these two; and he said he would follow me. Dan joined us, while the rest of the party followed the main herd.

Away went the two oryxes, their long black tails streaming in the air, and their sharp, saber-like horns, as they stretched out their noses, almost resting upon their necks. And away went we, with whip and spur, in hot pursuit. Rocks, bushes, ravines, and hills offered no obstruction to our well-trained horses. On we dashed, Harry and I keeping nearly side by side, while Dan was not far in the rear. My blood was up, and I knew no such thing as danger. I flew over a track which, in a calmer season, would have appalled me. On, on, on—until I began to fear that my horse would give out. At the top of a hill I saw the oryxes in the vale below me. Down I dashed, while they flew up the opposite slope; and disappeared beyond. I urged my horse on, fearing that the game was lost; and so it must have been lost had not fortune favored me. When I reached the top of the last hill I saw both the oryxes only a short distance off to my left, and the reason of this I quickly understood. Ahead of us, not far away, was a perpendicular face of rock, which had turned the animals from their course. As quickly as possible I brought my rifle from its rest, and aimed at the female, as she was nearest to me. The ball struck her just behind the left shoulder, and she plunged forward and fell. Without stopping to reload, I drove my horse on, thinking that Harry might be near enough to draw upon the other.



I expected to see the bull continue his flight, but in this I was mistaken. As soon as he found that his companion had fallen, he stopped and turned. The foam stood in great drops upon his breast, and his compact frame quivered like an aspen. His movements were so marked and peculiar that I could not help noticing them. He looked first upon his dead mate, and then upon me; and he seemed to comprehend that I had done the mischief.

I did not know so much of the oryx then as *I do now. I did not know how bold and dauntless he could be, nor how terrible he was in* his wrath. But I was destined to receive a lesson.

I was within about twenty yards of the spot where my victim had fallen, when the bull oryx bowed his head, and dashed towards me. My horse seemed to realize his danger, for he reared aloft, and tried to turn about. With all my power I held him to his course, and drew one of my large rifle-pistols. As he finally settled upon his feet again the oryx was upon us, and before I could free my right hand for a shot, both those terrible horns were driven into the horse's belly. I was thrown from my seat, and in a few moments more my poor beast was upon his side, quivering in the agonies of death.

The oryx now turned upon me, and in all my life I think I never saw a more terrible look of vengeful meaning in the face of either man or brute. His large, dark eyes burned with fierce fire; his mane was erect, and his long, sharp horns, dripping with blood, were ready for more work. I was upon my feet, with my pistol in my hand. If I did not kill him, or utterly disable him, he would kill me. If my aim was true, I was safe, for my pistol was as good as my rifle for a short range, carrying a ball equally large. But I dared not fire upon him as he advanced; for, with his head down, and his breast covered, I should hit no vulnerable point. If the ball should strike his skull, the angle was such that it might glance. I studied every chance, and formed my plan accordingly. The dead horse was between me and my enemy, and to reach me he must leap over the carcass. As he bounded into the air I sprang upon one side, and he took a step beyond me. Then, or never, must I succeed, for the dead horse could not serve me again. As the shoulder of the oryx appeared beyond me all my apprehension left me, and my hand was as steady as though I had been taking aim at a painted target. I covered a point where a black streak lost itself in the pure white that extended up behind the fore-arm, and fired.

The oryx was prepared to turn in his course; but he did not do it. The bullet had found his heart, and he fell forward, dead. Tears had fallen from his eyes, and an expression of something deeper than the mere death-pang was upon his face. He was a handsome, noble animal, and for an instant I felt something like sorrow for his death; but when I saw my dead horse, and remembered that my own escape had been a narrow one, I was reconciled to his demise.

Just as I had reloaded my rifle Harry and Dan rode up, and I related to them my adventure; and then I sent the boy to hunt up Job and Sunam, and bring me a fresh horse.

Before dark our camp was fixed for the night, and some of the steak of the bull oryx was cooked for supper. Bolus was the most enthusiastic over my exploit, and he considered my escape a marvellous one. He told us that he was once with a party who found a full-grown lion and a bull oryx lying dead together. The horns of the oryx were buried deep in the vitals of the lion, while the claws and teeth of the lion had found the life of the oryx.

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—There is something in the temper of men so adverse to boisterous and severe treatment, that he who endeavors to carry his point that way, instead of prevailing, generally leaves the mind of him whom he has thus attempted in a more confirmed and obstinate situation than he found it at first. Bitter words and hard usage freeze the heart into a kind of obduracy, which mild persuasion and gentle language only can dissolve and soften.

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Drunkenness.—Some of the domestic evils of drunkenness are houses without windows, gardens without fences, fields without tillage, barns without roofs, children without clothing, principles, morals or manners.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Suitor.—It *is* a fact, however much you may doubt it or profess to be shocked at it, that a person who does not believe in a Supreme Being will not be permitted to give testimony in a court of justice anywhere in Christendom. This is the settled law of all countries which have any system of law; and we think it is right. The troubles which you imagine would arise in the case of a Hindoo, or Chinese, or of an out-and-out pagan, have all been anticipated by the courts and remedies provided. The object of an oath is to take hold of the witness' conscience by whatever belief he has of his subjection to the government of an independent and all-powerful Being, and of that Being's inflexible administration of rewards and punishments. If the witness have any belief which will serve such a purpose, he is permitted to testify. A Christian, therefore, is sworn on the Bible, or on the New Testament, or the Evangelists alone; a Jew is sworn on the Old Testament, or the Pentateuch; a Mahometan is sworn on the Koran; a Chinese is sworn by his breaking a saucer and calling on the Higher Powers to crack his soul as he cracks the china, if he should not tell the truth; and so on; each class being brought under the influence of whatever religious or superstitious belief may be considered sufficient to secure from them the truth. Of course, an educated European or American, who does not believe in the existence of a God, nor in a state of future rewards and punishments, is inaccessible to any feeling or belief or fear such as the oath pre-supposes. Whether there are not infidels, or atheists, whose testimony would be perfectly trustworthy, is not the question. An oath is an adjuration to the Supreme Being; and of course it would be a farce for a man who does not believe in a Supreme Being, to go through with such a form.

Thess.—The quotation,

"Yes, for a spirit pure as hers
Is no less pure e'en while it errs.
As sunlight, broken in the rill,
Though turned astray, is sunlight still,"

may apply to your lady-love, and it may not. The metaphor, or analogy, is purely a physical one, and cannot be applied morally. Sunlight, of course, continues to be nothing but sunlight, no matter how it may be deflected or refracted. The sunlight is passive; it does not *break itself* in the rill, but *is broken* by influences over which it has no control. So, if your betrothed had been *compelled* from the right path by circumstances over which she had no more control than the sunlight had over the rill, and which she was as powerless to resist as the sunlight was to resist the refracting or breaking power of the rill, then she would be as innocent as the sunlight. But if she in any respect voluntarily chose the vicious primrose path to the straight and thorny way of virtue, or permitted herself to be drawn aside, then of course her case would be different from that of the sunlight aforesaid. Or, if she has only *erred*, and not *sinned*, the analogy may hold good, inasmuch as the poet expressly says,

"She's no less pure e'en while she *errs.*"

N. S., who writes a very elegant lady's hand, puts the following case: "There is a young man in this town, of prepossessing appearance, and who is also very vain—so much so, in fact, as to suppose that two young ladies are dying with love for him and of jealousy of each other. Now, several weeks ago, there being a ball in this place, this young man, for fear that one or the other young lady would take poison, in case he took the other to the ball, concluded to do a *very wise thing,* which was to wait until each young lady had been engaged to go with another gentleman. Then he (separately of course) invited each lady to go with him, and, *of course,* was very much disappointed when each refused to go with him, on the ground that she was engaged to go with another gentleman, and has since told how he 'managed the thing' to almost everybody who would listen to him. Ought either of these young ladies to allow him to continue his visits to her?" No; not unless he should make the most ample apology and reparation.

Brooklyn.—The clerk in the tax-office, whom you accuse of rudeness, ought to be dismissed from his clerkship, if what you say is true. May it not be, however, that your own manner was to him exasperating? or that you gave him needless annoyance? When people go to public offices to transact business, they often exhibit such a total lack of information in respect to the business to be transacted, that the officials find it impossible to get at the facts necessary for their guidance, and so are obliged to send the applicants away; whereupon the latter are apt to think that they have been very badly treated, and that the officials are a very unaccommodating and supercilious set. As a general thing, we have always found the clerks and officials of public offices to be as obliging and gentlemanly as any other class of men.

Semi-occasionally.—You should be careful how you make positive promises to ladies—or to anybody else. Instead of saying to the lady that you "would certainly do what she wished, if you lived," you might have said that you would do it unless something unforeseen, or something which you could not control, should prevent your doing it. That would have done just as well, and then she could not have justly accused you of not keeping your promise. When a man makes an absolute and unconditional promise, he ought to keep it, or pay the damages or penalty of breaking it; and if he does not, he must of course suffer in his reputation for veracity and honesty, and to some extent become an object of contempt to all who are cognizant of his dereliction.

T. O. H., of the 99th Regiment, N. Y. S. Volunteers, at Camp Mansfield, Deep Creek, Va., writes as follows: "I have just read an article in your most excellent paper, of this date, regarding chaplains in the army. If not presuming, I will volunteer some little information on the subject. According to Army Regulations, each regiment is allowed one chaplain, with the rank and pay of a captain of cavalry. Consequently, the most of them don the *uniform* of a cavalry captain, although they only *hold* the rank by courtesy, the same as a paymaster or surgeon. Some still adhere to a more God-like dress, but I assure you that *they* are few and far between. I have seen cases even where they have buckled on sabre and pistols, and passed themselves off, among strangers, as the genuine, simon-pure officer."

F. K.—The young lady to whom you refer has probably been told bad stories about you. If you really love her, and want her for your wife, you should call upon her and ask for an explanation; but if your pride exceeds your love, you can let the matter pass, without seeking to come to an understanding, as your friend has suggested. By the way, who is that "friend?" May he not be a snake in the grass? Perhaps he has himself caused the estrangement of the young lady from you, and is now advising you to pursue a course which would prevent the possibility of your ever coming to a good understanding with her again. You would do well to look sharp after that "friend."

Jersey.—It is by no means certain that the present year will be an unusually favorable one for fruit. There is plenty of time yet for some of those nipping frosts which bite into the very sap of the vegetable world. We *hope* we shall have none of them; but it would be rash to base any business operations on the positive assumption that there cannot be any of them. If you want to get rich at farming, you must avoid speculations of all kinds; and before purchasing largely in the fruit-growing interest, you should visit some of the most noted and successful fruit-growers in different parts of the country, and get all the information which they will give you on the subject.

R. M.—If your children are not forced into writing about things which they do not understand, it will be of service to them to write compositions. Let them begin by putting down on paper what they can about some subject or thing with which they are familiar. They will be apt to make horrid work of it at first, so far as orthography and prosody are concerned, but never mind. After a litttle practice and with proper instruction, they will begin to improve, and as soon as they get fairly under way their improvement will be rapid. *If started aright, and properly and persistently taught,* nine children in ten will develop as much talent for composition as for speech.

Inquirer.—A "paper" blockade means a blockade by virtue of a proclamation issued by a government which has not sufficient force to compel an actual blockade. If you have lost any property by attempting to run the blockade of any Southern port, you cannot recover it. The fact that your property was captured, shows conclusively that at the time it was captured our government had force enough in the vicinity to enforce the blockade. Your whining will avail you no more than your sophistry. The best thing for you to do is to become a loyal citizen and not try to run the blockade any more.

Sacerdotal.—Of course a chaplain has an excellent field for usefulness in the army. If your soul is thoroughly in your work, you can do more good in the army than anywhere else, at present. You should remember, however, that soldiers do not want a mere solemn, rueful-visaged, formal ascetic for a chaplain; but a brave, wide-awake, sympathetic human being, who can enter into their sorrows and their joys, and be their beloved companion, guide and friend.

Fighting Democrat.—As you have a wife and children you will be in one of the favored classes, when the conscription act shall be put in force. We are glad to learn that you and your party are so full of fight, for the Union.

Buffalonian writes a savage letter, in which, after much preliminary wrath, he says: "Shakespeare was right—absolutely, unequivocally and eternally right, when he said:

'Frailty! thy name is *woman!*'

The sex *is* fickle—I will not say false, because I have a mother and sisters—but the sex *is fickle.* Let me give you an instance of it. I was engaged to a lovely girl, of some property, and highly connected. I, also, am highly connected, but poor; but she said she didn't care for that, and I'm sure I didn't, either. I have been called a fop, but as I think unjustly—a fact which I mention because it may be necessary in order to understand what is to follow. Well, I was escorting her to a party, one evening, when the streets were very muddy, and I was dressed with unusual care. As we were crossing a street, a horse and cart came dashing along, spattering the mud awfully. I spontaneously rushed to the sidewalk, forgetting, in the excitement of the moment, the young lady, whom I unfortunately left unprotected in the middle of the street, and who was much spattered and, *as she says,* nearly run over by the horse and cart. For this '*cowardly offence,*' as she styles it, she has broken off our engagement, calls me a heartless fop, and has accepted the attentions of a fellow of low family, but who is said to be a very brave man, although I must say that I never saw anything in him or heard anything about him which *proves* that he is brave. Now, this is what I call a case of feminine fickleness, and a most gross case too; and I should be much obliged if you would tell me what I ought to do about it." You ought to keep still about it, else you will make yourself the laughing-stock of the community in which you live and move and have your being. What the young lady says about your conduct and about yourself, is true. It *was* cowardly; and you are evidently a foolish fop. Keep quiet.

D. K. C., Racine, Wisconsin.—You can't begin to compete with this metropolis in any kind of curiosities. The advertisement which you send us isn't a circumstance to one which we have just cut from a Demarara newspaper, that comes to us as an "exchange" for the Ledger, and which contains the following attractive announcement: "The Great Horse.—Will be put up for sale, at the City Sale Rooms, February 24, 1863, at noon, a strong, staunch, steady, sound, safe, snug, serviceable, strapping, supple, swift, smart, slashing, sprightly, spirited, sturdy, shining, sure-footed, sleek, smooth, spunky, well-skinned, well-sized, well-shaped, sorrel horse, of superlative symmetry, called *Samson;* with small star; and swift, square-bodied, slender-shouldered, sharp-sighted, and steps stately; free from strain, sprain, spasms, spavin, string-halt, staggers, strangles, seeling, sallenders, surfeit, seams, strumous swellings, sorrances, scratches, squint, splint, scurf, sores, scattering, shuffling, shambling gait, or symptoms of sickness of any sort. He is neither stiff-mouthed, shabby-coated, sinew-shrunk, spur-galled, saddle-backed, shell-toothed, skin-gutted, surbated, skin-scabbed, short-winded, splay-footed, or shoulder-slipped, and is sound in sword-point and stifle-joint. Has neither sick-spleen, sleeping-evil, sitfast, straggle-tooth, sand crack, subcutaneous sores, nor shattered hoofs; nor is sour, sulky, stubborn, surly, or sullen in temper; neither shy nor skittish, slow, sluggish, nor stupid. He never slips, strips, strays, stalks, starts, stops, shakes, snivels, snuffles, snorts, nor stumbles, and seldom sweats. Has a showy switch-tail, and a safe set of shoes. Can feed on stubs, straw, sedge, shorts, or Scotch grass. Can carry ten stone with great speed and long strides. Seller is seedy, and will sell for a small sum."

Science says that Homer must have been a very ignorant man, judging from the way in which he supposed storms and such things were caused. "For example," says **Science,** "when Ulysses escaped shipwreck, Neptune is described as getting up a storm in this fashion:

'He spoke, and high the forky trident hurl'd,
Rolls clouds on clouds, and stirs the watery world;
At once the face of earth and sea deforms,
Swells all the winds, and rouses all the storms.'

Now, do you not think that this is mere childish stuff? Certainly, you must say that it is unscientific. Do you not think it is?" Yes, we must acknowledge that it is *very* unscientific; but, still, we do not know any better way of poetically treating a subject. Poetry despises science to this day, and the modern poet who will dare to describe a thunder-storm with any scientific allusions to oxygen and hydrogen, would act as foolish a part as the scientific philosopher who explained the phenomena upon Homeric principles. It is because early times are less scientific that they are more poetical, and it is because women are less fond of science that they are more fond of poetry; and the poet to this day is an instinctive being, who consults his feelings more and his reason less, and we believe in most cases he will be found to be supremely ignorant of the principles of modern science, and possessed of little or no ambition to acquire such knowledge.

Julia.—The terrible vengeance which society takes upon a woman who has by her conduct once exposed herself to its power, is not so unreasonable as you seem to suppose. It is founded in the best instincts of the race, which can never be eradicated. The spectacle of a woman nobly struggling amid want and suffering, and the reproaches of the hard-hearted, to redeem her character, while it always excites the sympathy of the best members of society, seldom, if ever induces them to relax one whit of their prejudices against her. You must, therefore, struggle on, as you best may, looking for *perfect forgiveness* only to that Being whose prerogative it is to accord it to any or all of his erring creatures.

J. N. P.—If it be true, as you say, that you are always making blunders and never do anything right, you will have a hard task to acquire habits of carefulness and exactness. A young man nineteen years old ought to have acquired the ability to do *something* correctly. Your only way is, to set about reforming your habits at once and determinedly. Take plenty of time, and strive to be exactly correct in everything. When in company, keep quiet, and observe how others behave, and then follow their example with care, so far as you can. It may be that your statement to us is a blunder also, and that you are really not so bad as you say.

Brackett.—The pure Greek for "The Brothers" would be *oi adelphoi;* but it has been anglicized into *adelphi;* so that, in giving a hall, boat, street, or anything else, the Greek name equivalent to "The Brothers," it is correct to call it "Adelphi." This name is undoubtedly often applied, simply on account of its prettiness, without the persons using it having the slightest idea of its etymology or meaning.

C.—We do not see what occasion you need have for fear. If you do your duty, and keep a first-rate school, the incensed trustee cannot have you turned out, nor in any way injure you, so long as the other two trustees and all the persons whose children attend the school remain your friends. Go ahead in the regular and faithful discharge of your duties, and trust to Providence for the result.

California.—It is right for you to pay your debts in legal tender. Whether or not a creditor can legally require gold in payment of debts contracted before the issue of the legal tender treasury notes, is a question which is now being litigated in the courts. How it will be determined, no one can say; and, of course, until it shall be determined, no one can speak authoritatively on the subject.

H. H. R.—Ordinarily, you can with propriety present either arm to a lady, to escort her to the table, letting circumstances and convenience govern; but if it chance to be on some grand and ceremonious occasion, where all the particularities of etiquette are rigidly observed, you should offer your left arm.

White Plains.—Call on the young lady, and ascertain by a personal interview what the state of the case is. It may be that she does not answer your letters because she has some notions of propriety that forbid. Call on her by all means, and have a frank and friendly talk.

Nassau Street.—You are right. The base fellow should be soundly castigated. A man who would thus insult a poor girl should be lashed naked through the world, or *be exposed to his mother-in-law.* Tell the old lady all about it.

P. B. V.—Perhaps there is not force enough in your appeals to the mother of the young lady whom you want for a wife. Let her know how rich you are. Great wealth has been known to have some influence, before now, in such cases.

*** *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*

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